

P O E M S,

CHIEFLY

DRAMATIC AND LYRIC,

BY THE REV. H. BOYD, A. M.

TRANSLATOR OF DANTE'S INFERNO, N

CONTAINING THE FOLLOWING

DRAMATIC POEMS:

THE HELOTS, A TRAGEDY, || THE RIVALS,
THE TEMPLE OF VESTA, || THE ROYAL MESSAGE,

PRIZE POEMS, &c. &c.

Hæc incondita solus

Mencibus et silvis studeo jactabat inani.

VIRG.

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ERRATA.

ERRATA.

Page Line.
 Arg. last for Thucydules r. Thucydides
 72— 6 darst r. dares
 20— 4 dele comma after rage
 37—19 wolfish, r. wolvisb
 41—14 carreer, r. career
 42—24 Cephatu8, r. Cephalus
 43—21 for no space, r. a space
 59—last Athenian, r. Messenian
 63— 1 dele — at end of the line
 64—10 for fate, r. fate
 67—20 plains, r. plain
 90—27 know, r. knew
 91—note Trojans, r. Grecians
 92—16 then r. then
 97— 2 sammon, r. summon
 102— 3 for Ionion, r. Ionian
 141— 9 face, r. face
 147— 1 Introduction r. Induction
 159—12 musky, r. murky
 166—12 hiber. r. thither
 188—12 dictatocal r. dictatorial
 190—21 Cenvine, r. Convence
 194—20 at last, r. at least
 197—13 imperious, r. imperial
 207—16 Pharoah, r. Pharaoh
 211—18 avail, r. avail
 232—29 thunder, r. Thunder!—
 246—9 hill r. hills
 253—12 spoil! r. spoil :
 261—21 friend, r. friends
 Do.—26 and ; r. and
 268—13 was r. wast,
 279—20 Preeft r. Pricft
 326—12 dele !
 341—24 Stole, r. stole
 359—15 walehday r. watchdog
 360— 1 dele ! at end of the line
 364—27 after no r. cause,
 368—10 for pay, r. pay
 386— 6 after never r. held
 410—21 wen r. was
 420—last fellor r. feller
 421—12 robb r. rob
 431—16 Mountarean r. Mauritanian
 435—12 Peace r. Peace ?
 443—26 people, r. people.
 451—12 Sway,
 53—21 rose :

N. B. For any other mistakes which may occur, the Author hopes, his distance from the Press, will, in some degree, be admitted as an Apology.

Page Line
 479—2 Liberty
 486—note, Galls r. Gauls
 Do.—Do. decried r. discovered
 489—16 laid r. hid
 504—6 Monemon r. Mnemon
 512—3 plunder r. plund'rer
 537—7 dispaering r. dispairing
 528—15 Sphere
 541—11 Aneo r. Anio
 348— 9 *N. B. the inverted commas at the beginning of each Line, ought to have been continued to the end of the Poem.*
 553—11 Vanward r. Vaward
 566— 9 chearfulness,
 594— 1 dele 1st comma
 597—note r. the Weser in Germany
 603—last dele 1st comma
 602—11 her r. his
 607—note, Wesfer r. Westex
 609—22 the assembled r. th' assembled
 619—17 drain r. drain'd
 620—19 dele 1st comma
 623— 2 Assert r. assist
 628— 8 dele comma after Evening
 629—20 cleaning r. cleansing
 Do.—last, news to
 631—1 chance the
 — 6 sheathe his
 Prop l. 4 Negil r. Nigel
 — 5 Story r. Episode
 613—4 Sway!
 Do.—20 Senunur r. Senrus
 632—10 lovely fair ;
N. B. This is one instance of what is commonly called Irish Rhimes, I hope not many occur in these Pages.
 633—14 before, his
 642— indevastation r. in devastation
 643 dele last note.

Note at the end of the vol.—line, 1, 2, for the Puritans in the reign of James and Charles the 1st (as they were then called) read the Puritans (as they were then called) &c.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE
COUNTESS OF MOIRA,

BARONESS HASTINGS, &c. &c

A MUSE, long versant in ideal things,
That us'd to feel her youthful fancy glow,
With scenes, unreal as the gaudy bow,
Wild dreams of glorious deeds which fancy flings
Across her woodland range, with weary wings
Forfakes the fairy world, and loves to gaze
Where virtue charms the view, with genuine grace
Nor, tho' allied to heroes and to kings
Needs the superfluous boon, with borrowed rays
To gain respect, O would she deign to view
These wild-wood flowrets, with a fav'ring eye
Her smile would stamp renown, and wake anew
My feeble voice a loftier pitch to try.

Killiegh, 2d Dec. 1793.

P R E F A C E.

WHEN Collections of decided merit are just at this time offered to the public, I am afraid, no apology will be deemed sufficient for my presumption. This publication was meant for a period, when it might have appeared without the additional disadvantage of comparison, but many accidents occasioned the delay.—To a few of these Pieces, while I was a student in the University, Premiums were assigned, a circumstance which had a natural effect upon a young mind, though it gave expectations which were not realized. I could also plead the opinion of some characters distinguished for taste and genius, in favour of others of these Pieces, but I do not look on myself at liberty to mention their names,* as it would be pledging their opinions to the public on a point, on which the public may, probably, take a different side.

It has been objected to me that, in the following Collection, I deal too much in panegyric on living characters. In my defence, it may be urged, that all the persons addressed in this Collection, are either already favourites with the public or, on enquiry, will be found to merit that distinction.—To the Countess of Moira, I am under peculiar obligations: It is only one instance of the general tenor of her Ladyship's conduct, that she interested herself warmly in endeavouring to procure for me a provision for life. The application, though powerful, was, however, in consequence of an indispensable pre-engagement, ineffectual, but certainly, true gratitude is not to be determined by success, if I may trust my own feelings.

With regard to the propriety of occasional panegyric when deserved, I might plead the authority of the younger Pliny, a competent judge (it will be allowed) of the *rules of court* of Parnassus, "the praise of individuals or of states, has been sanctioned by immemorial usage. But when a neglect of laudable attachments, indicated a contempt of praise, the effect ceased of course, and panegyric was no more."* But indeed the strain of christian and pagan moralists who desire us to *follow things* that

* Plin. Ep. L. 3. Ep. 21.

It may be added as a corollary to the opinion of Pliny, that, till the claims became quite obsolete, the service is due.

lead to *good report*, at least imply, that praise is a stimulative to virtue, and then sure nothing in the nature of things, that renders it incongruous to adorn it with numbers and imagery. This is indeed, considering the matter in somewhat of an abstracted light, in which, not I, but the genuine Poet is alone concerned.

With respect to the panegyrist, If HORACE had only celebrated the virtues of PROCULEIUS, and STATIUS been content to commemorate the birth day of LUCAN, there would have been no imputation on the sincerity of either. DRYDEN indeed often prostituted his pen, but that is no reflection on PRIOR and AKENSIDE, when the one wrote his address to SHERLOCK, and the other to HOADLY. If it would be presumption in me to use the words of POPE, that I am

“To virtue only and her friends a friend.”

yet I am as little conscious of any duplicity or dissimulation in my poor encomiums on some illustrious names, as when I wrote the following lines to my friend Mr. BERWICK, a Gentleman, who, for his manly sacrifice of emolument to integrity, on a certain memorable occasion, deserved a much better Panegyrist. His conduct at that crisis had a sensible effect on the contest in which he was engaged, and which I will not pay so bad a compliment to my countrymen, as to suppose they have forgotten. When we consider how much he was at the time the favourite object of public attention and the many signal occurrences which took place here since that time, it is difficult to say that his example was not diffused beyond the circle of that society, to which he then belonged. Some uncertainty in his late determinations, occasioned the delay of sending the following lines, till the Letter-Press was finished, which I hope will apologize to my friend for their awkward appearance at the end of a Preface.

TO THE

REV. EDWARD BERWICK,

ON HIS GOING TO RESIDE IN THE COUNTRY.

BERWICK ! we little thought, when first we drew
The social lot from Alma's fostering hand
That you were chos'n to lead the youthful crew
A fearless pilot, to the lonely strand
Where honour dwells : while by the muse trepan'd
And o'er the wild by beck'ning phantoms led
I'm doom'd to wander still in fairy land
By visions tended, and in visions fed !
And thou art sent an humble crook to sway
Thy virtues all eclipsed in rural shade !
Yet heaven retains the glow of parting day
Even when the sun in Thetis lap is laid
So thy example lives ! Nor thou disdain
The lowly duties of the quiet fold
The sun, whose glories float along the main
When *Adrias dawning towers are ting'd with gold
With more effect the winding slope illumines
Where, flush'd with genial life the future vintage blooms.

* Venice.

P R E F A C E.

To the following TRAGEDY.

IN that period of the war between the Athenians and Spartans, or Lacedæmonians, when the former had seized on the maritime fortresses of Naupactus on the North, and Pylos, on the South of Peloponnesus, the Spartans pressed on all sides by the enemy, and apprehensive that in their present distress the Helots, their slaves (whom they treated with unparalleled cruelty) would revolt from them, contrived by the following stratagem to find out such persons among them as would be the most likely ringleaders in case of an insurrection.

They invited the most spirited of the Helot youths to have their names enrolled in the troops of Lacedæmon. To such as offered their names, they presented their liberty, they were led in procession round the temples, crowned with garlands, and, in a short time they all disappeared "nor did any one know" says Thucydides, "by what means they perished."

Such is the account of this extraordinary transaction, given by a cotemporary historian of unimpeached veracity Thucyd. l. 4. c. 80. The author has taken the liberty of giving it a dramatic form, with the addition of an Epifode, connected with the principal story.

The fimilarity between the situation of thefe slaves, and our negroes in the Weft Indies, (the Helots of modern times) will at once fuggelt itfelf to the reader.

The principal defign was, to illuftrate a certain phenomenon in human nature, which, tho' fometimes the caufe of the moft tragical events, yet originates from one of its moft beneficial propenfities. That law of our nature, by which we are determined in general, to judge of others by ourfelves is given to us for the moft benevolent purpofes, viz. that, by judging of the feelings, the claims, and propenfities of others, by our own, we might be induced to act with regard to them in all inftances as we might reafonably expect, they fhould perform the relative duties to us. This, as an original law of our nature, muft, in its univerfal ftate, have predominated with great energy, and even the perversion of this law, muft, for that reafon, retain a confiderable influence. That a perfon who has injured another paff forgiveness, or atonement, endeavours often without any provocation to make his

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ruin complete, is an instance of human depravity which has often been observed by *moralists* though as far as I recollect, it has not been sufficiently accounted for. In such a case, the persecutor seems to act from a regard to his own security ; from the notices of retributive justice which haunt the consciences of the most depraved, he knows that retaliation is his due, if he leaves it in the power of his adversary to revenge. When he endeavours, therefore, to ruin his antagonist, he acts from an idea of *self-preservation*, an original law of our nature, nor is he less observant of the dictates of this other law, by which (as the generality judge of the sympathies and claims of others by their own) he judges of the depravity of another, by the standard of his own vicious nature. According to the situation of human nature, these laws must operate uniformly, as well on its more depraved state, as where its corruption is less observable. They are laws, which, tho' sometimes fatal to individuals, cannot be suspended, more than the laws of gravitation and attraction (which are also attended with pernicious effects sometimes, in single instances) else the business of life would be suspended. A corrupted nature, under the influence of these laws, must, of course, sometimes, produce terrible catastrophes, such as is the subject of the following Drama. But such examples constitute part of the regular oeconomy of providence, which, in this instance, as in others, de-

duces good from evil; as by such examples, we are taught a lesson of self-government over our own dangerous propensities, and vigilance against the injurious machination of others.

For the prevention of such complicated mischiefs as arise from the perversion of these original laws of *self-preservation*, and *judging of other's dispositions by our own*, the wisdom and activity of legislators, has, in all ages, been employed.

But there may be instances of depravity in the best regulated societies, of which the laws cannot take cognizance. In such cases, I think, there is observable another remarkable instance of the interference of providence. The sum total of moral evil is often diminished, even by means of that propensity in some, of judging others as cruel, as fraudulent, or as vindictive as themselves. The villain is constantly on his guard against all mankind, *for he judges all others by himself*. Hence he often prevents the machinations which others may have designed against him, and prosecuted with success, had he been less upon his guard. Thus by his unfavourable opinion of others, some evil is prevented, and some good eventually produced, the society, with which characters like these are connected are, by them, laid under a general

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obligation of transacting every measure in which *they* are concerned, with vigilance, caution, and prudence.

The supposed necessity, of which the oppressor makes a plea to himself, for heaping misery upon misery, has been the immediate occasion of much of the calamities of mankind, from the days of Spartan inhumanity, to those of Creolian slavery. Our countrymen have set the example of a more generous policy. To the Catholics, who had been aggrieved, they have given emancipation, privilege, and power. It is to be hoped, that this will be the commencement of a new school of political philosophy, wherein a communication of benefits and good offices will be experimentally taught as the best method of securing all the blessings of society.

I hope I will be excused for adverting to another instance of this propensity in our nature of judging of other dispositions by our own. It is indeed, foreign to the present purpose, but has been lately attended with consequences so memorable, that it claims some attention. It has been observed before, that many evils to society are often prevented by the mutual distrust of depraved minds. It is, on the contrary a common remark, that innocence is the cause of credulity, and credulity of ruin. This is often the misfortune of the weak and ignorant. But the evil does not stop here, for even the person who is blest

with an enlightened and virtuous mind, who is conscious of his own rectitude, and inspired with lofty ideas of the dignity of human nature, and who thence, supposes others as amenable to the dictates of right reason, as he finds himself, is, from *that* consideration, easily induced to conclude that reason itself, and the knowledge of the rights of man are sufficient, without any sanction, to keep society in order. This amiable propensity in favour of virtue, would be entitled to great indulgence, if it was not often attended by very dangerous consequences. The person who thus judges of the virtue or disinterestedness of others, by his experience of himself, is liable to be misled, either by splendid, though impracticable ideas of poetical perfection, to attempt innovations in the constitution, or what is more common, he is exposed to the seductive representations of designing men. These, under the sanction of his name often complete that mischief which otherwise they durst not have attempted. Many examples of this kind have been exhibited in the history of all ages, but in none has there occurred a more memorable instance, than the Revolution of France, where the noble, but fanciful schemes of a few truly respectable characters, schemes, which were calculated for a state of human nature improved beyond the scale of experience, and which were at first highly recommended by the

reverence claimed by such characters,* have been since so miserably perverted.

There are few points of resemblance between the state of Lacedæmon, and France, under its former Government, yet in one instance, there is a remarkable similarity. There was no middle order in Lacedæmon, who might have preserved the balance between the two parties. All were imperious masters, or abject slaves, divided from each other, and kept apart by insuperable prejudices. There was not any middle order in France,† to preserve the balance between the Noblesse, and the Bourgeois. And that instinctive repulsion, which kept these apart, have produced consequences shocking to humanity. Hence, when the lower order found their strength, they pursued their antient lords with a degree of inveterate animosity, unparalleled even in the sanguinary disputes between the two parties in the little commonwealths of Greece. Our situation is happily different. That alienation of property introduced by Henry the seventh, and the natural operation of commerce, have introduced among us a middle order of society, equally connected with the highest and lowest ranks, and who preserve the balance between both: Their influence pervades the

* Clermont, Tonerre, Lally Tolendal, Kerfaint, Sieyes, &c. &c.

† The middle order in France, was nearly destroyed in the long and bloody contest of the League, not to mention the proscriptions which ensued on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, by Louis the fourteenth.

whole fabric of society, and as the younger branches of the nobility, are occasionally introduced into the House of Commons, that constitutes a principle of union to the political body. The subordination of the clergy to one head, and the variety of orders of which they consist, (not to mention their personal influence) gives them the advantage of forming a very strong bond of union among the different orders of society. Those circumstances will form (it is hoped) an effectual bar against any such terrible innovations as have been lately experienced in France. With such an awful example before them, the middle orders, possessed as they are of extensive political power, general information, and personal influence, can never so far forget themselves, and the interests of society at large, as to fill the heads of the commonality with indefinite claims, and ideal rights. While they preserve their influence, and pursue the obvious means to extend it (for it may be still further extended) they may bid defiance to all the unfounded theories, and politic machinations of the democratic sophist.

One good effect which, probably may follow from the atrocious scenes, which the contest of the two orders has occasioned in France, seems to be this that, both there, at last, and in other countries, it will teach superiors and inferiors to feel more intimately their mutual dependance, and to draw the bonds of society still closer, by mutual good offices.

A R C H I T E C T

THE

H E L O T S.

A

TRAGEDY.

A R G U M E N T.

THE Messenians had, at an early period of their history, been conquered and enslaved by the Spartans. The remains of the nation (except one large body, which had escaped the devastation, and settled on the shore of the Crissean Gulph, to the north of Peloponnesus) were incorporated with the old inhabitants of Laconia or Lacedæmon, who were now in a state of servitude under the general name of Helots. During the progress of the Peloponnesian war, between the Spartans and Athenians, the Helots, stimulated by the inhuman treatment of their masters,* and encouraged by the distress of the Spartans, resolved to make an attempt to regain their liberty, or, at least, to secure better treatment. The fears of the Lacedæmonians, which had induced them to relax their old sanguinary laws; and the secret intimations of assistance given by the Athenians, contributed to their encouragement. At this crisis, the action of the following poem begins, —the concluding circumstance is taken from Thucydides.

* It is well known that the Spartans encouraged their young men, to waylay, and massacre the Helots by night, in order to train them for military expeditions.

P E R S O N S .

HIGH PRIEST OF APOLLO.

ARISTODEMUS

ALCANDER

PHILEMON

AMPHIDAMAS

PHORBAS

} *Chief Helots.*

MEMNON, a supposed Persian captive, overseer of the Helots.

PHÆBIDAS, a Spartan.

ALCEBIADES, an Athenian Ambassador.

HELOTS.

SEMANTHE, daughter to Aristodemus, the chief of the Helots.

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THE
H E L O T S.

A
T R A G E D Y.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

Scene—A Wood near Amycle in Laconia.

AMPHIDAMAS AND DYMAS—TWO HELOTS.

Amph. WHAT! Memnon told you!—Memnon! Sparta's spy!
Messenia's scourge! and will you trust to him?
A fabler! a barbarian! Slave of slaves!
Long galled by Persian bondage, and in scorn
Set over us, to aggravate our wrongs,
With the last insult to the Grecian name?
He told you that a casual quarrel caus'd
This cruel stroke that lops our strength away!
What was the circumstance? Repeat the tale!
And then, observe my comment!

Dym.

What I heard

Carries its own conviction on its face ;
 Nor would our magistrates at such a time,
 Like gray-hair'd ideots, break in wanton sport
 The laws themselves had made. Alcander's doom
 (Ever lamented by Messenia's sons)
 Rose from a casual quarrel, in the fane
 Of Jove's immortal daughters. There, at noon,
 When midst ascending fumes, the swelling hymn
 Roll'd in long plaudits round the awful dome,
 The fierce Androcles saw Alcander nigh,
 Listening the chorus ; and inflam'd with rage
 At the intrusion of a branded slave
 Amid the rites of freemen, in a tone
 Of mingled rage and scorn, address'd the youth ;
 Who, too incautious, or inflam'd by wrongs,
 Retorted with like scorn. The brother, then,
 Of proud Androcles interpos'd to soothe
 His rising rancour, and a transient calm
 Promis'd fallacious peace, but night beheld
 His smother'd passions kindle like the fires
 That promise future tempest. By the moon
 The savage trac'd his noble prey along,
 Even to his native woods, and struck the blow.

Amph. Time will detect the falsehood, or confirm

Its truth. If our proud masters meant to shew
 Respect to their own laws, the legal sword
 Had punish'd the assassin.

Dym.

This is certain,

Androcles has absconded ; or (at least,
As Fame reports,) he has not since appear'd.—

Amph. I trust no rumours ; what I clearly know,
That I'll believe. But Rumour is suborn'd
(I fear) to soothe us in deceitful calm.
Spite of surrounding foes, and rude alarms ;
Some dreadful machination is on foot
Some baneful damp, to quench the rising flame
Of Liberty, that kindles thro' our bands.
Else why, with all this semblance of regard,
This sanctimonious face of sympathy,
Why, when the council met to change the law
For our relief, was midnight nam'd the hour
Of dark decision ? Why did they select
The Temple of the Furies for the seat
Of counsel ? Did Humanity's soft laws
E'er take their birth from these detested walls ?
Why were the Helot's try'd and constant friends
Excluded from the dark divan ? And why
Are all Messenia's friends, where'er they rul'd,
In Lacedaemon's martial bands, cashier'd,
Despoil'd, at once, of all their crested pride,
And, in their room, our most inveterate foes,
The gloomiest bigots of their cruel code
Promoted ? Say, my friend, are these the signs
Of lasting league, of amity, and peace ?

Dym. Be calm—methought I heard a rustling noise

At hand—I would not wish your words were heard.
 My ear was not deceiv'd—'tis Memnon's self—
 He must not find us here !

Amph.

I wish it not.

Of all the proud surveyors of our toils,
 Tho' some are more imperious, none I dread
 Nor hate so much as him, yet know not why.

Exeunt.

SCENE II.

Scene continues.

ENTER ASPASIA IN THE CHARACTER OF MEMNON.

Asp. Ye kindred spirits ! oft within those groves

Your tears of old for our repeated wrongs,
 Perhaps, have fallen. But fate, with iron hand,
 Long since has dry'd those tears, and laid the sigh
 That in those glades rose frequent ! still indeed
 Perhaps, even in the blest Elysian plains

Ye mourn the fair occasion, ever lost,
 When to the tomb ye sunk without a name !

I too could mourn like you, could wander on
 Inglorious thro' those groves, and wail my lot.

—But I disdain this lot.—I too must fall
 Like you ; but whether lapse of lingering years
 Shall lay me low, or some auspicious hour

Devote me for a people, on myself
 Depends ! I was not born to die a slave.—
 And now the deed is done which lifts my name
 Conspicuous to the nations. Hence—away
 Vile habit ! Stern Androcles' bloody steel
 That laid the blooming Helot low, denies
 Concealment ! Like the flash that fires the dome
 Of some proud temple, and discloses wide
 The solemn shrine that holds the guardian god,
 This blow detects me to their wond'ring tribes.
 This is no common fate, like those who fell
 Ignobly doom'd beneath the conscious night
 To try the temper of a stripling's steel !
 No Bacchanalian chorus wakes the groves,
 No festal dance, no rural song ! 'Tis rage,
 Revenge, and loud rebellion ! Let it come.
 This arm shall point the lightning on the heads
 Of our proud despots ! This is near the spot,
 Where, nightly, their divan the seniors hold ;
 There, in the moment, when their passions mount
 In due ferment, my skilful hand shall throw
 The last ingredient in, that bids them blaze,
 Till in the billowy conflagration caught,
 Yon haughty walls subside. What I have told
 Has rais'd their wonder at my skill, that seems
 Far, far above the sublunary range
 Of human comprehension. Could I see
 The afflicted father, ere the assembly meets

The train were surer laid. And lo ! he comes ;
 See ! where he wanders like a stricken deer,
 The barbed shaft deep rankling in his side !
 Yet thro' the cloud of sorrow that o'er-hangs
 His brow, vindictive rage, with transient gleam
 Illumes his reverend visage. Here I'll shrowd ;
 Still somewhat, even from him, may yet be learn'd

[Retires.

ENTER ARISTODEMUS.

Arist. Then all my vigilance, my cares were vain,
 To check thy daring soul. Poor youth ! I ought,
 (If I had priz'd thy life) with double seal
 The secret to have kept within my breast,
 Untold even by a look. But that pure flame,
 Deriv'd from him whose ashes slumber here,
 Had mark'd thee out some prowling Spartan's prey,
 And thou had'st fallen as now. In other realms,
 When partial Heaven awakes the patriot fire,
 It leads the blest possessor on to fame,
 And kindles in the course ! But here, alas !
 It blasts the owner, as a bolt from Heaven,
 And sets in blood ! But let the vengeance come,
 I have deserv'd it well ! In every chance
 And change of sad disaster, which befell
 Our toiling tribes, when every night was mark'd
 With blood, each day with violence and wrong,
 I scap'd till now ! I never felt at home

Till now ! Oh, injur'd people ! I, your lord,
 For whom your dearest blood, if I requir'd,
 Had stream'd, was too, too timid, too remiss,
 Too patient, selfish, cold ! Or if I felt,
 'Twas not for you I felt, but for my son ! —
 I fear'd, I strove to ward his doom in vain,
 But Fate has reach'd him now ! O had his blood,
 From gallant Aristomenes deriv'd,
 Bedew'd some glorious field, I then had smil'd
 Upon my boy's distinguish'd tomb ! But now
 He falls in blooming youth, yet falls in vain,
 Like some unwarlike savage to his den,
 Trac'd by the pack that snuff the tainted gale,
 And hunt him to his covert. But shall I —
 —Shame to the blood of Aristomenes ! —
 Shall I, thus like a woman, wail his loss,
 And say, he fell in vain ? No—not in vain
 While I survive ! What tho' the frost of age
 Congeal my blood, my tongue that us'd to preach
 Patience, shall trumpet now revenge and slaughter ;
 I have a son to tremble for no more !
 Then rouse, ye quiet groves ! Rebellion ! come.
 Awake ! Sedition ! Haste ! ye gathering storms,
 I'll point you to your prey ! Alcander's blood
 Has wash'd away my fears ! Why should I linger
 Thus on the trembling verge of life, while rage—
 Athens—Messenia—and immortal fame,
 Marshall me on to glory ! —

[To him. Enter Memnon in a Persian habit.

Arist.

What art thou ?

Art thou the soul of my brave ancestor
That comes to check my rage, or fan the flame ?
Aerial visitant ! Thou seest a man
Who dar^d to hear, whate'er thou dar'st to tell,
And execute whate'er thou bidst.

Memn.

He thinks me

Aside.

A spirit or a god, the midnight gloom
Favours the thought. He shall not know me yet.

[To Aristodemus.

Whate'er I am, it is not mine to tell.—
But persevere ! the gods are on thy side,
And favour freedom ! I am sent to warm
Your bands with new desires, and give the glow
That lifts the slave to manhood ; think not then,
That mangled form, which soon, with pious rites,
Thy slaves shall carry to the funeral pile,
Thy son ! His better part survives, and walks
From soul to soul, with unseen steps, but not
Unfelt. Observe his motions, and adore
His holy footsteps ! He will lead you on
To certain conquest ! Fare thee well, and prosper. [*Exit.*

Arist. Is it even so !—Why, then, lamented youth !

Those eyes no more, with weak, effeminate drops,
Mean to profane thy glorious fall ! Thou setst
And setst in blood ! But, like the lamp of day,

That rises on the vernal morn, and brings
 The zephyrs in his train for the rude blast
 That swept the summer buds away, thou livest,
 As ere few suns decline, the world shall know !

TO HIM MEMNON AGAIN—PHILEMON AND OTHER CHIEFS OF
 THE HELOTS.

Phil. Thou hast astonish'd us ! Where couldst thou learn
to
Mem. That Dorian dialect of perfect phrase.
 Thou seem'st a native here ! Could'st thou have gain'd
 In Asia's melting climes among the hordes
 Of willing slaves, such hardihood of thought,
 Such glowing sentiments, as seem to shame
 Athens, in all her independent pride ?
 Forgive us, if we doubt.

Arif. Is this the form
Aside. So lately seen by me ?

Phil. Thou seest us to the verge of ruin led,
 Our recent hope of independence quench'd,
 When brave Alcander fell. On Sparta's lords
 Thou art dependant. Thou, perhaps, suborn'd
 By them, the ready minion of their will,
 Employ'st thy supple arts, thy fair pretext
 Of generous sentiments to probe our hearts,
 To try, if yet we feel ; if aught remains,
 Aught, not to be extinguish'd by our tears,
 Aught yet unquell'd beneath the weight of woe,
 Ready once more to catch the falling spark

And flame for liberty. We are not now
So lost to prudence, as to fall a prey
To such low machinations.

Mem. That you doubt
My own assertions, till my proofs are given
To clear my conduct, no resentment breeds
In me, Philemon ! nor suppose I scorn
To choose *thee* umpire of the test I bring,
When to this reverend sire I now appeal,
With grief deprest ; yet still in him survives
Messenia's latest most endearing hope,
Scorning the frowns of Fate.

Arist. O mock us not
With hopes ! But why encroach upon the hour
Of sympathizing sorrow ? Can you raise
The dead ? Can you restore my gallant son ?
Why didst thou, like a vision, come even now,
(For well I know 'twas thou, whom late I saw)
With mystic words to raise fallacious hope ?
Say, Persian ! do your native plains produce
Balm to the bleeding heart ? You rather came,
I fear, with poison to foment the wound !
Yet pay some reverence to paternal woes !
Retire, and ye, my friends ! let me entreat
Your absence, till the funeral rites begin !

Mem. Be sorrow sacred. But, remember, sire,
To sorrow like a man ! This woman's dew

But ill becomes the old, imperial stem
Of fallen Messenia!

Arist. Who informed thee! say! [*Surprized.*]

Mem. The same who told
Of things unknown to human ears, but mine,
Yet known in other worlds, where those, whose dust
In this long consecrated mold repose,
This instant are consulting on the doom
Of old Messenia.

Arist. Ha! thou start'st a thought
Might wake the dead! Who slumbers here? Unfold!
Some know the secret, but to alien ears
It is a secret still.

Mem. Beneath this mold
Slumbers the last of your imperial line,
Who follow'd down Eurotas plaintive stream
With desolation, fell revenge, and blood,
For Sparta's wrongs! I need not add his name!—

Arist. Here sleeps the dust of Aristomenes!
Amazement. Who informed thee?

Mem. First declare
Whether I guess the number of the kings
That rest around their great progenitor
On everlasting guard, like yonder stars
That circle round the pole!

Arist. What number, say!

Mem. The number equals the celestial choir
Of Jove's harmonious daughters!

Arist. Heaven and earth!—
Some god or demon told thee!

Mem. Now recall
From memory's dormant stores, if e'er thou heardst
An uncouth saw, by antient prophet's sung
What should befall the tenth, if still he kept
His ancient regal honours unprofan'd
By Hope, by Interest, or by Fear!

Arist. To him
Was the revival of Messenia's hopes
Assur'd; and hence, alas! my sad despair,
Since my Alcander's loss! To him I gave
My right!

Mem. Despair not yet, there still remains
The tenth—thou liv'st for vengeance! Others still
Of the Herculean line survive, by thee
To be adopted. Rouse to vengeance! Rouse!
The frozen snake at Spring's reviving breath
Feels the return of life!

Phil. Unequall'd man!
Heaven's favourite! Yet vouchsafe another glimpse
Of heaven's eternal counsels (if 'tis given
To mortal minds to know), why did the powers
Above, permit the spirit of the state
So long to dream away the rolling years
And why that mystic number chosen, that seems
A ninefold charm?

Mem.

Young man, you aim aright !

It is a ninefold charm : The holy choir
 Of Pindus Fount, * the lovely guardians still
 Of Sparta's throne, with everlasting prayer
 Long wearied their immortal fire, to grant
 Each one, thy thrones depression, till the Fates
 Had nine times spun the long empurpled thread
 For nine of thine imperial ancestry,
 From Aristomenes to thee deriv'd—
 Each gain'd a royal sacrifice, a life
 Of old Messenia's line, so long to save
 Their favour'd Lacedæmon. Pheron fell
 The last, thy royal fire !

Arist.

By all the gods

Then there are hopes ! had not Alcander fallen !

Mem.

Mistaken man ! thy son's lamented fall

Is life to old Messenia's cause !

Arist.

Explain,

Thou more than prophet ! even the beating storm
 Much more the tempest of the mind would calm
 To hear thee ope the mysteries of heaven !—
 How is the state advantag'd by the blood
 Of fallen Alcander ?

Mem.

Much afflicted fire !

Be it thy consolation to be told
 Thy son was summon'd by the awful call
 Of providence, to fire the general breast

* The Muses worshipped at Sparta.

With keen vindictive rage, to add revenge
 To public spirit, to cement with blood
 Messenia's combination : Have I given
 A test of more than mortal reach ?

Phil.

Thou hast !

Mem. Then let the hopes of more than mortal aid

Expell despondence from your sinking hearts !
 And, to assure you more, this instant hour
 Rites, to your climes unknown, shall ope the gates
 Of yon Empyrean, on this gloomy scene
 To let in more than day. Then shall ye know
 With due precision, what the gods require
 And what they promise. Haste ye slaves, erect

[To some of his own slaves.]

The altar of the Magi. Light the flame
 And meet the coming dirge with holy songs !—
 —Break the deep gloom of yon funereal cloud
 With heavenly splendours, like created light
 With Hades old contending.

*[The slaves prepare the altar, the holy fire, &c.
 the Helot chiefs with Aristodemus go to meet
 the funeral procession.]*

MEMNON—ALONE.

Thanks to the knowlege from my fire deriv'd
 Of old Messenia's story ! To those swains
 I seem a delegate from heaven ! They take
 My flowery fictions, my poetic tales

For dictates of the gods, immortal themes !
 Yet of such prophecies I have been told
 Or true or false. If true, why should not I
 Avail me of that energy they breathe
 To second my own views ? Alcander's life
 (Had he surviv'd,) had serv'd me as a base
 To build my claims ; on one congenial stem
 Our titles might have grown to after times
 In everlasting bloom. But he is gone ! —
 His sister still remains ; her claims to mine
 Are hostile ; tho' alike. I must contrive
 To break this bar, or move it from my way !
 I would not dip my hands in regal blood !
 It only then remains, by artifice
 To spirit her away, or fright her hence
 By fear of some impending ill,—they come !

[*The funeral procession approaches, attended by
 Aristodemus, Philemon, and the rest of the
 Helot chiefs.*]

Phil. There fell Messenia's glories ! Thou art fled
 Brave spirit ! Who amidst the bellowing storm
 (When prying curiosity, appall'd,
 Dreaded to walk our vales, and murder flunk
 Into her wolfish den, with blood embath'd)
 Came like the spirit of the tempest forth
 When, riding on the clouds, he calls to arms
 His fiery factions in the angry air,
 Then, when the loud revolt of nature seem'd

In Ithome's aspiring sons to rouse
 Each independent passion, dormant long.
 When to the waving woods and sobbing storm
 Eurotas, swoln to rage, by watry moons
 His solemn cadence join'd,—then—how he stood
 Like some sage master of a powerful spell
 Thro' the fermenting multitude around
 Erecting their fallen hopes, and teaching slaves
 To think and feel like men. But oh, ye shades
 Of old Amyclæ ! you, ye conscious groves !
 The fatal secret was not kept ! Ye storms !
 Ye winds proclaim'd it ! Every partial god
 That favour'd Sparta, watch'd the gloomy hour
 Pale Hecat watch'd, and mixt her midnight bane
 To dash our sacred counsels—else, how dar'd
 Those wolves of Sparta, crouching to their dens
 Before the Attic hunter, they, who long
 Have seem'd afraid to stain our peaceful cots
 With moon-light massacre, or lust, again,
 Thus to insult a people ? Thus to shed
 Our dearest blood ?

Amph,

Alas ! my friend, too sure
 The mystic secret of his birth, so long
 Our best palladium, and the charm, that kept
 Whate'er of ancient manhood yet remain'd
 Or loyalty alive, tho' known to few
 Was certainly divulged—else why on him
 (After a long deceitful pause) should Fate

Fasten at once, and bear our hopes away ?

Phil. Behold the slaughter'd son, and mourning fire.

[*Enter Helots, bearing the body of Alcander,*
Aristodemus, &c.

Arist. Here rest the lov'd Alcander's last remains !

That daring and intrepid soul, so late
Who might have rais'd Alcides' falling race
Now ranges in Elysian liberty,
No longer manacled to earth, compell'd
In painful post to combat with the tide
Of this bad world !—Thy virtues—noble youth !
Were splendid signs that led the venom'd shaft
With surer level to its mortal mark !—
Thy worth undid thee !—hadst thou been content
To slumber out the live-long, thoughtless night
Amongst thy fellow hinds without a dream
Of what thy ancestors once were,—I now
Like other fires had own'd a living son !—
But, oft when others slept, thy soaring soul
Took wing from this ignoble nook, and sped
Her way to other worlds, congenial climes
To hold high converse with thy mighty fires
And breathe that pure Ethereal flame, that lifts
The man to godhead ! Why those splendid boons
This prodigality of heaven, and waste
Of worth, like some vile hind, to fall obscure
By a Laconian ruffian's hand, unless
To mock the hopes of Man ?

Mem.

I thought, old fire.

Those earthly vapours had no longer power
 To trouble thy clear intellect, so late
 Admitted to the counsel of the gods
 An earthly guest!—must I again repeat
 The need of some uncommon sacrifice
 Some deed of direst import, whose deep guilt
 Devotes the bloody city to the power
 Of him, who is the source of every ill?—
 —To those lethargic spirits, long diffus'd
 To flame at common wrongs, some flagrant act
 Was requisite, to fire plebeian souls
 To thoughts of vengeance! Know, the heav'nly powers
 Work not by human means, else man might think
 All things the regular effect of Fate
 Or rul'd by yon revolving orbs above
 And quite forget *their* being! But full oft
 Dreadful and devious, as the comet's course
 By signal and astounding steps they move
 To call us back, when wand'ring. Know besides
 The two contending powers, who sway below
 Great Orosmales, and the dreaded name
 Of Arimanius, source of every ill
 (Your Jove, and Pluto) oft in council dread
 Meet on their frontiers, and with league unknown
 Dispense the fortunes of this nether world
 The scene of their alternate sway), like Sol
 And his fair nightly sister, silver-thron'd,—

Oft, when the power beneficent is pleas'd
 To raise some state, or bid a people breathe
 Th' ambrosial air of dear bought liberty
 He gives his dark competitor the power
 To arm his red right hand with every plague
 That humbles mortals, famine, fire and sword,
 Inclement seasons, and the dreadful band
 Of pestilential armies in mid air
 Encamping on the settled gloom. By them
 He wreaks his horrible intent, and deems
 The subject world his own, but deems in vain
 The friendly power permits his fell career
 And over rules his rage. The dire extreme
 Sharpens the human intellect, and calls
 The manly virtues forth, calm Vigilance,
 Devotion, Fortitude, the social ties
 That fasten man to man with links of love
 And lifts a band of heroes, fit to brave
 The mortal menace of oppressive power.

Phil. Interpreter of heaven! thou well hast prov'd
 Thy mighty Mission by no vulgar signs!—
 —Thy words might cheer despondence, but, alas!
 Had Jove design'd our freedom, he had left
 The heir of Aristomenes to lead
 Her loyal armies!—I am chill'd with years!
 Without a son!

Mem. But not without a child!
 Thou hast a daughter, lovely as the morn

She has a lover, bold, aspiring, brave,
 And one who shares the honour of thy blood
 Adopt him to your line!

Arist. His worth is witness'd
 By the attachment of his fellow slaves
 O be their love less perilous to him
 Than to Alcander! heaven benights our views!

Mem. To clear your doubts, (if any doubts remain)
 An awful revelation, yet behind
 Ripe for disclosure, labours to a birth!—

Amph. Where will this end? I feel a sacred awe
 As if some god in human shape, were near!

Phil. A god or man he seems, the sent of heaven
 Attend! he opes her lips to speak again.

Mem. Know then! desponding men! on Persia's bounds
 My youth, observant of the will of heaven
 Was fixt to watch the never dying flame
 To which th' imperial heirs of Cyrus bend.
 Thence, when reliev'd at last, at early day
 As, overwatch'd, I laid me down to rest
 Where thro' the purple gates of morn ascend
 Visions of true presage, methought I saw
 The blush of early day, ascending still—
 I seem'd to watch the mists that roll away
 From fair Gedrosia's western hills, before
 The coming god, to spy the first, faint beam
 That gilds their lofty brows, and hail the power
 With wonted hymns adoring:—Soon assault

The misty curtain mov'd away in folds
 Of gorgeous tissue, by the orient beam
 Enrich'd with all heaven's drapery, that seem'd
 To match the labour of celestial looms—
 The piny mounts umbrageous sides appear'd
 In pomp of light and shade, disclosing full
 His giant lineaments, as the light clouds
 Mov'd over his majestic front, now hid
 Now manifest, in morns resplendent vest.
 Deep echo from the vales return'd the voice
 Of morning flocks and herds, the rustling groves
 Swell'd with aerial minstrelsie and all
 Was vernal life and joy! but, westward far
 An hovering cloud, upon the mountain brow
 Seem'd settling long, and oft was seen to poise
 His grey extended wings to fleet away
 And often seem'd, with light, fantastic toe
 To spurn the heath-crown'd height, like the blue flame
 That hovers o'er the dying taper's point.—
 —At last, from every glade and thicket near
 Each gulphy stream, and sedgy glen, it seem'd
 Its kindred fogs to call—the kindred bands
 In dim detachments up the channel'd sides
 Of that steep wilderness ascend, and mount
 Blotting the pure æthereal bounds.—Anon
 The bands of ancient night, dispers'd so late
 Seem'd rallying fast from their Tartarean caves
 And wide encroaching on the golden edge

Of day, which, circumscrib'd, but lovely still
 Skirted the rosy orient. Like the powers
 Of Ariman they seem'd, when his proud hand
 Unfurls the flag of darkness in the face
 Of Orosmales, lord of life and love.—
 But with the west wind soon the stormy south
 His potent breath combin'd, and swept along
 The rallying fogs, wide verging to the poles
 In broad circumference around. The day
 Seem'd to retire, and call its orient beams
 Back to the fount of light. The fount of light
 Was seen no more. But in its stead, forth lanc'd
 The lurid lightning; in those peaceful bounds
 Where fair tranquillity for ever smiles
 The delegate of darkness seem'd to take
 His gloomy post and sadden all the sky;
 Then hurl'd his spells around; the last faint beam
 Soon sicken'd into night. I saw with dread
 The fearful portent, nor the portent long
 Was unexplain'd, for soon a faded form
 Desponding stood before my mental eye—
 It bore th' undoubted ensigns of the god—
 Whose presence gilds our temples. * But his looks
 Were all eclips'd, his dazzling crown was lost
 Shorn of his beams he stood, like one depos'd
 From his celestial honours, and at length
 In sighs began. “Those signs which late you saw

* Mithras, or the Sun, the tutelary Deity of the Persians.

" Are ominous to Persia. From the west
 " The hand of Ariman conducts a foe
 " Portentous to her glory, as yon clouds
 " That blot my beams—from fair Ionias isles
 " The Doric bounds and Macedon they came
 " Like night and darken all Choaspes shore !
 " The heir of Cyrus from his noontide height
 " Falls like proud Clymene's presumptuous son
 " His *safety* is the *discord* of the foe
 " His hope is Sparta's fall."

Arist.

Myfterious heaven !

Her hope is Sparta's fall, and what is ours ?

Mem. After a solemn pause, he thus proceeds

" Even now great Orosmades lends the means,
 " The Athenian squadrons, like the raging north
 " Lay the proud honours of her forests low
 " And in Amyclæ's groves a secret fire
 " Kindles amain, and soon will lift its head
 " O'er their devoted shades—the guardian god
 " Of Thebes *, who led his conquering squadrons on
 " To Ganges from Ismenos ; will not scorn
 " To aid me, for of old my potent help
 " Confirm'd his victories, my temper'd beam
 " Foster'd his vines on India's palmy shore ;
 " Held in suspense the periodic rains
 " Or gave the timely shower, with milky flow
 " To call the power of vegetation forth,

* Bacchus, supposed to have conquered India.

" And, when the Naiad train, whose viewless bands
 " Supply the springs of Ganges, and dispense
 " To their calm votaries the limpid bowl
 " (Deem'd sacred as the noëtar of the Gods)
 " To all the tribes of that religious land)
 " Dreading the vines inspiring juice, of power
 " To spread revolt among the sober swains
 " With deep nocturnal orisons implor'd
 " My sister goddess of the watry star
 " With her cold influence, and malignant power
 " To chill th' inverted year; to brew the rains
 " With deep'ning inundations from the hills
 " To sweep their summer glories all away
 " To Ethiopia's main.—I soon perceiv'd
 " The close confederacy, tho' wrapt in night—
 " Then when the congregated vapours spread
 " Dispensing wide their chill Tartarean steam
 " To the deep cavern, where the sisters sate
 " Prisoning the infant moons, I pointed full
 " My burning beam—the scatter'd vapours fled
 " And left the mountain's brow, the Naiad's band
 " Felt my full glories scorch their sea-green hair
 " And drop'd their tinkling urns, and fled away
 " To hide them in the mines, among the stores
 " Of unsunn'd silver, and forbid the fount
 " Above the flowery bank to swell the stream
 " Or drench, with ceaseless rain, the viny plant,
 " In favour to the god who gave the boon—

" Go thou ! I here divest thee of thy robes
 " As priest of Mithras ! Go ! and seek the shore
 " Where first * he saw the light, approach the fane
 " On Daulias lofty summit, and declare
 " (After due Orisons) my urgent claims
 " For his alliance, bought with friendship old.
 " Bid him inspire his Thebans to the field
 " Against the Spartans haughty race, who threat
 " Even now, the throne of Cyrus ! thence depart
 " And seek in fair Amyclæes groves, the tribes
 " Who boast the blood of old Messenia's line
 " (Tho' now the name be gone, disgrac'd and sunk
 " In that of HELOT). If the swains receive
 " Thy mission gladly, rouse the bolder youths
 " To turn upon their lords, and nobly wrench
 " From their slack hands, the old, paternal spear
 " And face their cruel hunters." Here he soar'd
 Amid the gathering gloom. Suspense I stood;
 Now wrapt in wonder, now in doubt involv'd
 How best to win my way to Daulias bounds
 Thro' warring nations. To Miletus thence
 Many a long league, in many a quaint disguise
 I shap'd my course at last, and thence embark'd
 Aboard a ship of Samos for the strand
 Of old Cithæron. Soon the black north west
 Arose, and drove our fated barque along
 To Malca's hostile bay, when soon we met

* Thebes, where Bacchus was born.

Lyfander's martial brigandine, and struck
 To his superior flag—the crew in chains
 Were doom'd to various toils, but I was sent
 (Thanks to the gods, who led my fated steps)
 To join my lot with you.

Arist.

Propitious gods!

Could he, who fills his clay-cold bed, again
 Arise, how would he soar above all dread
 And coward doubt! How would he grasp the bolt
 Of thund'ring Jove, in fancy, and disperse
 His foes, with heaven's own lightning?

Mem.

Better thus!—

Perhaps, were he alive, his eager spirit
 Burning for premature exploits, would lead
 His Helots on to ruin, where the way
 Seem'd to conduct to glory.—Let that thought
 Be now thy solace! our revenge, tho' slow,
 Is certain.

Arist.

Then! Laconian tygers! then!

I yet may live to thank you! not content
 With simple murder, on his godlike form
 Of matchless mold your savage malice stamp'd
 A thousand wounds—ye meant it his disgrace.
 It is his glory, that his worth provok'd
 Such wolves as you, that bay the radiant moon
 For shining on your fell misdeeds—ye marr'd
 That beauteous face with wounds—the sovereign fear,

Of manly beauty, where revenge and malice
Might look their rage away!—

Mem. Old man! no more!

The time prohibits weak complaint—let all
Loud passions cease! and in this quiet grove
No accent of impatience taint the time
Due to religion.—You, the ministers
(Selected for the purpose,) light the lamp
The symbol of that radiant power, who leads
The golden day, whom Persia's tribes adore
At dead of night, and at the blushing dawn,
He led them on to glory—from the east
Inspiring godlike Cyrus to pursue
The flaming track of his diurnal car
Till Asia's western climes confest their lord
And Egypt sunk before him!—Call around
Your Helots to partake the solemn rite
And from the splendid shrine, with beating heart
Inhale the present god, while breathing high
Poetic rapture swells the solemn strain
Such as from Sparta's flute yet never flow'd:
Devoting Lacedæmon to the powers
Of Ariman and everlasting night
Others prepare Alcander's funeral pile.

*[The sacred lamp is lighted and set on the urn
over the tomb of Aristomenes.]*

Mem. Chaos, and ancient night! Ye nameless powers
Who share the throne of darkness, and preside

Over the moonless realms, forgive the strain
 That hails your luminous rivals, far remote !
 Nor deem us rebels to your ancient sway
 That thus we sing the god, whose orient beam
 Pierc'd your primæval shadows, and expell'd
 From half your bounds Oblivion's torpid reign.
 Ye swarthy Satraps ! from your ancient claims
 We mean not to detract ! But (if our vows
 Merit acceptance in your gloomy realms,
 Dishonour'd by creation) to fend down
 New colonies from these devoted plains,
 Whose deeds of genuine darkness well have earn'd
 The dire distinction. Now begin the hymn.

HYMN TO THE SUN.

Hail ! resplendent orb of day,
 Where'er thou point'st thy circling ray,
 Now, perhaps, with downward rein,
 Courting o'er the Indian main,
 Or led thro' unknown tracts of æther blue,
 Giving the nether world thy beams to view.

At thy flaming steeds returning,
 Nature lays aside her mourning,
 Nature wakes the choral throng,
 While thou inspir'st the general song.
 The morning gales that rising sweep
 Old Sericana's purple wave,
 Bear the fogs in phalanx deep,
 Back to Demogorgon's cave !

The verdant tribes of summer, which ascend,
 Deep clust'ring from the genial soil below,
 With silent transport feel your influence blend,
 The spring of life, and love's transporting glow.

Thus thy burning shaft employ,
 'Gainst Laconia's tyrant sway,
 Till thou seest their squadrons fly
 Like the fogs at early day,
 Thus along the smooth Euratas,
 (Soil unknown to every worth)
 Rising thick as flowery Lotes,
 Give the manly virtues birth!—

Mem. Break off—break off—the bright symbolic sign
 Burns ominous and dim, like Persia's god,
 When Night's fair empress comes, with envy pale,
 To intercept his glory. We must try
 Some other charms. I shudder but to think
 On those that still remain! For, what remains
 But that, which cleaves the mundane shell, and calls
 The weary ghost (new reconcil'd to night,
 And all her solemn charms) to hated day
 Again?—And one portentous bribe alone
 Has weight to gain the gloomy ARIMAN,
 To render back his purchase!

Arist. What is that?
 Say, Persian! thou, that hold'st with either world,
 Thy dread communication, is it needful
 That more of old Messenia's royal race

Should bleed ? My gallant ancestor (whose name
 Is now, alas ! my only boast) when Sparta,
 (Detested Sparta !) girt with direful siege
 His capital ; when thy resplendent god
 (Our Delphian oracle) with sad response,
 Demanded from the Herculean line
 A spotless maid (to please the powers below,
 And with her immolated blood atone
 For thousands) soon o'ercame paternal fear.——
 I have a daughter. Does that stern regard,
 Say, I must also quell paternal fear ?

Mem. Such is my aim, old man !—You guess aright,

Aside. But know not yet my motive nor my claim
 To old Messenia's throne, were she remov'd,
 Her fears, if nothing else, shall chase her hence.

Arifl. My child is dear as life—nay, dearer far.
 Slavery had long ere now sunk this grey head
 To seek a welcome grave. But love prolong'd
 My days, in thralldom, and in shame. Yet say not
 That she shall bleed ! I have no hopes but her,
 Nor other hope does now Messenia boast.—
 —Some, it is true, of great Alcides line,
 In bondage, or in exile, *may* survive,
 But she alone is known the lineal heir
 Of our Messenian stem ! And, should she fall,
 The bond, that holds our wretched tribes together,
 Sinks with her to the ground, and what am I
 To fill a nation's trust ?

Mem.

Or she, or I

Aside. Must quit the claim !*[To Aristodemus.*

I take it not upon me
 To tell the gods' intent at large ;—but soon,
 Perhaps, your messenger from Delphis' fane
 Will clear your doubts. The virgin's sacrifice
 At Ithome, by her stern fire's command,
 Was not accepted. For Messenia's hands
 Were foul with long-contracted guilt, the same
 Which now brings down the wrath of all the gods
 On Sparta. Your stern fires, without regard
 To age or station, with repeated stripes
 Compell'd their Pylian slaves to labour on
 Beyond the strength of man. Such was the guilt
 That sunk your nation to the ground. But now,
 After long ages of atoning shame,
 Your toil-worn tedious summers in the eye
 Of righteous Nemesis, perhaps, will meet
 A due regard, and blessing on the rite,
 Whoe'er may be the victim. And behold !
 Your messenger returns.

Aside.

My fate and her's

Are now in even scale !

ENTER PHORBAS.

Arist.

Come, without preface,

Deliver what you bring ! The time precludes
 All ceremonious prelude !——

Phor.

Then I fear

We are betray'd. At least, that our proud lords
Suspect our purpose !

Mem.

On what grounds dost thou

Imagine this ?

Phor.

When first I reach'd the fane,

At morn, I met Pausanias in the porch,
He spoke not ; but with dark suspicious look
Survey'd me round, as if to read my soul,
And strait departed.

Arist.

We, alas ! have felt

His fear, by marks more deadly. Oh ! my son !
Thy fall too plainly spoke the Spartan dread !

Phor.

Ha !—is Alcander fallen—Oh ! mortal wound

*seeing
the
body.*

To all our hopes !—Ye Helicean bands,
Ye now may stray, like flocks without a guide !
That youthful leader, whom your hopes pourtray'd,
Your dearest hopes beguiles !

Arist.

Enough of him.—

But say !—You nam'd the Helicean bands.
What bands of Helice ?

Phor.

That unseen power,

Which bids alternate waves of night and day
Roll o'er this nether globe (while here ye mourn
In double depth of woe and midnight gloom)
Leads on the day-spring from Naupactus height,
In bright procession !

Arist.

From Naupactus coast ?

Has Athens seiz'd the strait ; and, from the shore
 Of Pisa, pour'd her legions ? Then her sword,
 From either quarter lops the giant limbs
 Of this new Typhon ! Pylos, Pisa now
 Confess th' Athenian sway !

Phor. From Athens nought

I learn'd, but from the Delphian porch I saw
 A noble youth, with looks of chearful haste
 Returning.

Mem. But those Helicean bands,
 What are they, and from whence ?

Phor. Lament no more.

Forget your bonds ! For oh ! thou happy sire !
 Thou yet mayst see Messenia lift her head,
 Her crested head, proud as yon waving pines,
 Proud as the sons of old Ithome, led
 By godlike Aristomenes, to sweep
 The haughty files of Sparta from the field,
 Or send them trembling to their wolfish dens !
 For know, my friends, on the Crissean shores,
 Your nation still survives, that seem'd extinct,
 For ever sunk on sandy Pylos coast.
 It lives again, like that sulphureous mine,
 That sinks, they say, in Etna's flaming gorge,
 Then from Vesuvius, lances to the stars,
 And frights fair Italy. These poor remains
 Of Ithome, long hid, and foster'd long
 Obscurely in Ætolia, have burst forth

Like yonder Pleiads from the wintry storm,
 That takes a surly leave ! But late they crost
 In many a proud bark o'er the wond'ring wave
 Of Crissa, clad in arms, and settle now
 Round Helice and Bura, to the strand
 Of western Elis. Like a band they come,
 Of hornets, from our fields to drive away
 Those monsters fed with gore ! Their pæans loud
 Peal to the sounding main. The sounding main
 Sends them provisions, arms, and warlike stores
 From rich Naupactus, and the ports around,
 That skirt the long Crissean, and obey
 Athenian influence, or Athenian power.

Arist. This from report we learn'd before, but fear'd
 It was some hostile stratagem, to lure
 Our hopes to blossom, like untimely spring,
 Check'd by the nipping North's invidious breath,

Phor. Those eyes beheld them.

Mem. Where ?

Phor. Even now—But now

That sun, whose steeds a few short hours ago
 Plung'd in the broad Ionian, saw the scene,
 Saw his red splendours as they rose, return'd
 By old Messenia's far reflecting files
 Doubling the day ;—the purple main afar,
 In hoarse applause, remurmur'd to the voice
 Of early vows to the associate gods,

Latona's * son, and Neptune. Either god,
 From the blue empire and the burning throne,
 Each other seem'd with mutual smiles to hail,
 Mingling their glories!

Mem.

† He that rules the day

From his bright station deals impartial light,
 Both to the proud oppressor and the slave
 Who drags the clanking chain. The tyrant scorns
 Th' ætherial blessing, and the weary wretch
 But wakes to curse his rising beam, that shows
 A long variety of woe and pain.
 But in the nightly visions of the just,
 (After his radiant eyes have view'd the world,
 Its miseries and wrongs) he deals around
 That awful verdict oft, that seals the doom
 Of thoughtless tyrants, tho' they bask secure
 Beneath his blessed beam.

Phor.

Thou well recall'st

My stray'd remembrance to its holier task
 The message of the oracle. The rite
 Of sacrifice was past—the Pythian maid
 Ascends the tripod, and in pale suspense
 Attends the coming god.—The coming god
 Known, by the sparkling eye, the horrent hair
 And heaving breast, at length, descending full
 His wonted seat possess, and, after pause
 Her lab'ring words found way

* Apollo, the Sun.—† Viz. The Sun, Mithras, the Persian Deity.

" Messenian race

" Alcmena's son * before the parent god
 " Presents your prayers, and joins his suppliant voice
 " To learn, if yet the period is arriv'd
 " To lift you from the dust—and break your bonds
 " *The period long is past* (returns the god
 " Who wields the thunder) *yet it still returns*"
Each morning, golden opportunity
Daughter of time, revisits yonder plains
And every night returns, with new complaint
Of fair occasions, lost by negligence
Or coward fear. The only means to learn
What moment favours freedom is to know
The time, when mortals dare to act or die
When the existence of a slave is scorn'd
Compar'd with independence. Let them learn
(If not from men) from those proud savages
That roam the midnight groves, and thin the fold
With dark invasion—did they ever know
The tramels of a slave? or meanly fawn
For a poor pittance at a master's foot
Or draw the pond'rous plow? MY instinct lives
IN THEM. That Eleuthorian flame, that warm'd
The sons of Athens, when the Persian fled
Before his lifted spear! MY instinct lives
In every sinewy arm that wields the spade
Or goads the steer on yon Laconian plain

* Hercules, the patron of Messenia.

*And would they learn my will, let them consult
The oracle within !*

Arist. By all our wrongs
Thou bring'st an answer, worthy of a god !
And may the tide of time for ever bear
Our generations to oblivion's deep
If now we miss the fair occasion given
At once to seize, that lifts us to the view
On this wide theatre of gods and men
Applauding !

Phorb. Hear the sequel, for the maid
Forsook not yet the tripod " Sons of Ithome"
In calmest mood she thus began " The means
" How to commence the dread career of fame
" Are yet to learn : the goal is in your view
" The first step gains the race, the conscious moon
" Must see you turn against the savage foe
" Who marks your tracks with blood ! the coming night
" Soon in her shadowy retinue shall bring
" The wonted ruffian to your peaceful plains
" With wolfish spirit, prowling for his prey
" Him seize, and to the subterranean gods
" Pour his devoted blood ! The manly deed
" By all partaken, will to all dispense
" Unshaken fortitude and firm resolve,
" Kindled by taste of hostile blood, despair

* It is well known that the responses of the oracle, were often the result of political influence.

"Of pardon from their dire vindictive lords

"And settled purpose to succeed, or dye."

Mem. Then I must haste to wake my rival's fears

Aside. And from th' imagin'd danger speed her flight.

[*Exit privately.*]

Phil. 'Twas then *that* ruffian's shadow which obscur'd
The lamp of Mithras, when it burn'd so dim !
The prescient gods have sent the dark eclipse
To warn us of the prey, which now, perhaps
On this dread verge with blind unconscious tread
Is entering on our snares.—Begin the search.

Arist. Then this alone remains.—Oh ! had I learn'd
The secret sooner ! had Apollo deign'd
To wake our fears before Alcander fell
And mark'd the ruffian as he walk'd our woods
Alcander yet had liv'd, or we, at worst,
Had seen the murth'rer pour his hated blood
To the dread queen of Vengeance !

Phorb. Yet, perhaps
Flush'd with success, the ruffian of the night
Again may visit these sad groves ; the blame
If then he scapes, will light on us. The gods
Have free'd themselves.

Arist. Go Mardon ! Cephatas !
Terpander ! Pheron ! Pyramus ! and Dymas !
Each in your several districts, wake your friends
And bid their busy footsteps trace the dews
Till dawn—no common prey shall crown their toil.—

—Fair daughter of Latona, whose bright lamp
 So oft has led the robber to his prey—
 O thou, whose virgin ear was oft profan'd
 With cries of violation. Thou whose shafts
 On Tityus and Orion, veng'd of old
 Their brutal purpose—pierce those envious clouds
 Remove the veil of night, and give to view
 The secret foe, that comes, with fell intent
 To stain thy virgin walks with recent blood!

End of the FIRST ACT.

ACT II

Scene—The Same.

MEMNON—*SOLUS.*

The billet did its business well—it woke
 Her fears, and chac'd her from her father's house.—
 But why return'd, and whence this wond'rous tale
 Of violence and rescue? Is it feign'd
 Or true?—It is no time to question now!
 I still am unsuspected, and some means
 Of more effect this working brain must find
 To spirit her away, and leave no space
 To lay the basis of my fortunes deep

But here the rangers, and their captive come,
I hasten to resume my priestly garb ! [Exit.

[Aristodemus, and Helots, bring in a captive.

Arist. Haste—bring him hither—We adore yon gods !
You have not bade us linger in suspense
Upon a nation's doom ! Produce your captive !
Oh ! should it be the ruffian, whose fell hand;
Laid my young hero low—how would I thank you ?
'Tho' poor even that atonement, for such blood,
To take a single life !

[The captive is led forward.

His presence shows
A manly beauty, and a port beyond
The vulgar file ! The gods have chosen a victim
Not quite unworthy of the great occasion !
Say where you found him, how employ'd, how arm'd,
On what design ?

1st Hel. No sign of guilt he show'd,
No mark of terror his demeanor wore,
More than you see at present ; nay, he ask'd
To be conducted hither.

Arist. Tell me—say
to the Why that impassion'd gate ? that scornful smile !
Cap. From no contempt. I smile at your mistake.
Yourself will smile, when you forget your rage
Against your firmest friends !

Arist. What ! art thou not
A Spartan, and a ruffian, sent to spy,

And single from our tribes the choicest prey
To dye your maiden sword in Helot's gore ?

Cap. From no Lacomian veins my birth I draw,
As well my dialect may show. My country
Is that distinguish'd * land, where Theseus rul'd,
Now the proud arbiters of Greece. To you,
(If you command those Helot tribes) I bear
My orders.

Arist. Tell thy business ! Falter not !
It must be bloody, deep, important, secret,
Well suited to the past ; but no disguise
Will here avail. Messenia's tottering state
(To be cemented by thy Spartan blood)
Must not be baffled by a soothing tale !

Cap. Mistaken men ! Would Heaven the time allow'd
To send to Athens, (if you doubt my faith)
Your fears would soon disperse !

Arist. An artful scheme !
But futile as the former ! You would gain
Time to elude our vengeance, and to leave us
To wonder at our folly !

Cap. Send this instant. —
Be I your hostage till your messenger
Returns. Then will you find me not a spy,
But delegated from th' Athenian state,
To proffer aid ; nay more, to raise you high

* Athens.

From this inglorious state, akin to beasts,
To cope with men.

Arist. You think us beasts, indeed,
Devoid of all sagacity !—Whate'er
Thy purpose, thou and thy confederate friends
Can best disclose. But now thy thin pretext
Is all transparent as the air. Thy words—
Yes—thine own words condemn thee ! We ourselves
A messenger already have dismiss'd
To Athens and to Delphi, both at once,
And were there aught of moment, not by thee,
But them, the answer had been sent. But thou
Prepare to meet thy doom !

[*As they are going to seize him.*

Cop. Hold ! On your lives
Presume not thou to touch me, or thy slaves !
Approach not, or by all th' Athenian gods,
An horrible revenge awaits the deed.
Let me but send to Athens ! Let me wait
In bonds, till my credentials may arrive !

Amph. Could it be done !—But think, Aristodemus,
How often wild temerity has rued
The violence of direful deeds too late.

Arist. He only wants to profit by delay,
And what from thence might grow. He bears no stamp
Of Athens in his dialect, or garb !—
Have we not seen Athenians ? And from whence
Can he then be, but from our deadliest foes,

Our masters of Laconia ! Call the priest,

[*Exit Helot.*

And bid the altars fume. Propitious gods
Accept our offering !

Cap.

Am I then to fall

Obscure, inglorious, by a curst mistake ?

Nay, then, whatever hostile power, whose hate

Has lur'd me to the snare, shall never see me

Thus tamely, like a steer, to slaughter led !

[*Struggles and overthrows several of the Helots,
but is at last overpowered and muffled for
sacrifice.*

ENTER MEMNON, AS PRIEST.—THE ALTAR LIGHTED AND
SURROUNDED WITH PREPARATIONS FOR NECROMANCY.

Mem. Ye nameless powers ! who in the dark profound,
Despise the common sacrifice, and joy
To see the voluntary victim throw
The load of life aside ! Ye who inspire
The Gentian widow with the dire resolve
To plunge amid the flaming bounds, that part
Both worlds, and seek the partner of her soul
In other elements than ours—command
The dull, reluctant, lingering wish away
That ties the fallen captive to the world !
Give him to taste of immortality.
That his exalted sentiment may scorn
The vapid pleasures of this nether clime,

That sicken in enjoyment ! Imp his wings,
 That droop like some young eaglet's, on the verge
 Of dread vacuity, yet unexplored,
 Till his undaunted parent heaves him off,
 To poise his pinions in the wide expanse
 Of the sustaining air. If ye accept
 The offering, by thy dread response, we soon
 Shall learn ! The gods, who rule our changing spheres
 Remand us back to you, who know no change
 In purpose or in fortune. THEY will melt
 At human woe, and turn at human prayer,
 Like their own clouds and sunshine. Ye are stern,
 Immoveable, and scorn the wav'ring breeze
 That causes chance and change below ! Prepare
 The rites ! And now produce the captive youth,
 Unmask him—let him look upon his fate.

[The mask is taken off and discovers Alcibiades.]

Mem. Ha !—Who is here ! Oh Nemesis and Jove !

Afide. What dreadful vision bursts upon my sight !
 My deadliest foe within my power ! The man
 That caus'd my exile, forc'd me to renounce
 My native clime—and oh—but I must save him,
 Else my revenge were short of half its ends.—
 It must be full, complete !—

Arist. What new delay ?

Some sudden ecstasy has seiz'd our priest,
 Mark his disorder'd mein, his kindling eyes
 Like glaring orbs, that threat revenge and war !—

And now they melt to pity—say what means
This strange convulsion?—

Mem. This may yet be manag'd

Aside. To save him, all unworthy as he is
I yet may gain him!—

To Pardon, reverend sire

Arist. The gods in mystic warning yet suspend
The prisoner's fate! His birth is wrapt in clouds
Athenian, or Laconian, none can tell—
Forbid it, Heaven! the altar should be stain'd
With aught but hostile gore! Messenia paid
Too dear already for a sad mistake!

Arist. We will not be deluded!—say, what means
Your mystic rapture?—Name the wondrous man
So late our captive for intended crimes
On bloody purpose bent, and seiz'd within
Our groves; now suddenly transform'd and claim'd
The favourite of the gods!—

Mem. The gods demand
A Spartan life, but should your hasty hand
Shed this youth's blood (no Spartan blood perhaps)
Messenia still might mourn.

[*To them, enter Semanthe in haste.*

Sem. Immortal gods!

I am not yet, I hope, too late to save
My saviour—to return him life for life!

Arist. What profanation's this!—Semanthe! Why
Forgetful of your sex, will you intrude

Where yet no female is allowed to spy
Our interdicted rites ?

Sen. Forgive me, father !

Forgive the transports of a grateful mind
I heard the rumour of a captive's fate—
My heart presag'd it might be he, whose arm
Guarded my life—I ran, I flew to save him
Oh my prophetic heart ! this ! this is he
Who snatch'd me from the ruffians !

Arist. Gracious heaven !

From what a dreadful plunge of fate I rise'
How every hour with strange discoveries teems
Forgive, whoe'er thou art, the dark intent.—
What horror had surrounded me ! What guilt
Of black ingratitude, tho' undesign'd
Tho' sanction'd by religion ! Yet disclose
Why thus involv'd in night, and dark disguise
You chose to hide your worth !

Alcib. Thy son could tell

Whom oft I met in secret—but I spare
Your heart the keen remembrance of your loss.—
I did not wish that more than one (and he
Of highest trust) should know the deep intent
That led me hither—tho' my lucky hand
Rescu'd the fair Semanthe, when I learn'd
Alcander's fate, I deem'd Messenia's hope
For ever sunk, and deep desponding trac'd
My backward steps, irresolute to go

Or stay. To warm your Helots to revenge
 Or leave them tamely in their turns to fall
 Deliberating long I stood—Till fate
 Drew these night rangers on my lonely track.—
 But those strange rites, this midnight sacrifice,
 Those awful preparations shew, that still
 The spirit of my slaughter'd friend survives.
 Even from below, the powers that love revenge
 Seem to call on us. Even the fates proclaim
 Some mighty birth at hand !

Arist.

Twas then to thee
 We owe my son's too sanguine hopes. Alas !
 Too long it seem'd the birth of youthful fancy
 And generous ardour ! Too intense it flam'd,
 Too, too conspicuous ! Like the lambent blaze
 That hovers o'er Eurotas' banks by night,
 It led the midnight murderer to his mark,
 Whose fatal dagger struck my noblest hopes
 To earth !

Alcib.

If consolation yet can touch
 Thy heart, be it thy comfort, reverend sire,
 That now, with better caution we pursue
 Our plan, which else the ardour of thy son,
 (Generous and bold, but to the perilous times
 Ill suited) had undone. He, by his birth
 And merit, mark'd our pilot, in a sea,
 Full of quick sands, and shoals, and sudden flaws,

And dangerous currents, had o'erfet our bark,
Which needs more steady hands (like yours) to steer.

Arist. Alas, I am too old ! My nerves are slack
With grief and age ! Tho' vengeance well might brace
Limbs more decrepid and relax'd than mine.

Alcib. Your son is fallen, but still the line survives
In your fair daughter. On her choice, by you
Confirm'd, the fortunes of your line depend.
A race, that underneath the patron power
Of Athens, yet may climb its antient throne.
—But let us leave this dark, ill-omen'd spot,
This scene, design'd for massacre and blood ;
Its omen suits not with our better hopes.
Come — I have something further to propose,
Beyond your boldest aims.

[*Exit Alcib. Arist. Semon. and Helots.*]

Mem. But now he was within my grasp—and now

Alone. He breaks the snare. Oh foolish pity ! Vain
Remorse ! I thought him bold ! I deem'd him brave !
His blooming beauty, his aspiring hopes,
His generous scorn of every danger, won
My heart to let her just revenge exhale
And speak the word that sav'd him ! But even now
His fate or mine, has led him to pronounce
The word that seals his doom, unless his heart
Recall it ! If I took his aim aright,
His last proposal show'd a close intent
To share Messenia's claims, Messenia's rise,

To gain that lovely maid in whose blue veins
 The hopes unite of that old regal line.—
 —I cross him there, or perish in the attempt.—
 I with Semanthe share the royal blood.
 And he is mine—mine—by an elder claim!
 I thought my bosom arm'd with triple steel.
 I, who, for years had roam'd barbarian climes,
 Had seen and felt the horrors and the toils
 Of servitude. But servitude to this
 Is freedom, ease, and transport! Heaven and earth!
 Were all my toils for this disastrous end,
 To see another gain the glorious prize,
 The price of all my tears, my wand'rings all!
 —He seem'd within my reach. I well could bear,
 Like Tantalus, to lose the golden fruit
 Of all my care! But to behold the spoil
 Another's! There distraction lurks, and death
 Suspicion, rage, and all the jealous fiends.
 —But let me not betray my sex too soon.
 Let me not blast Messenia's fairest hopes!
 Oh! mockery of reason! Vain result
 Of thirty tedious moons in patience spent
 In bondage and in sorrow! Holy source
 Of constancy and inward light, that spread'st
 Over the swelling tempest of the mind
 Thy halcyon calm, whatever be thy name
 That rul'st the mental tumult! Oh! dispense
 One ray to me! nor suffer me to mar

With selfish passions thus the glorious birth
 Commencing ! Yet I may at least, explore
 His spirit ! The foul taint of jealousy
 Perhaps has warp'd my reason ! Or, perhaps,
 Semanthe may be found alone ! If not,
 She has a lover ! Be it mine to fire
 His mind with jealousy against this guest,
 This new defender of Messenia's maids
 From midnight ruffians. May kind Heaven avert
 The dire necessity ! I would not mar
 That harmony, which cheers the rising state
 With ill-tim'd discord 'mongst her chiefs—if Heaven
 Forbid not other methods. Fate and love
 Reign paramount. But see, beyond my hopes,
 See where she steals to pour the secret prayer
 Before the hallow'd urn ! I must retire.

[Walks apart.]

ENTER SEMANTHE.

Shall I that secret to the gods disclose
 I scarce can tell myself ? O thought profane,
 Will they, too partial, aid my fond pursuits,
 And with the mist of passion blind, release
 From right's eternal bonds, the heedless wretch,
 A willing captive of the wand'ring heart ?
 I dare not think it. Syren ! cease your strain,
 For from that urn there comes a solemn voice
 That checks the passions in their wild career,

And pales the rosy hue of Hope. It says,
 " Oh think, Semanthe ! on my fate !—no more,
 " Thy brother's hand the helm of Reason sways,
 " Or aids thee with his counsels ! Thou, perhaps,
 " Sole heirs of Messenia's line, canst boast
 " That awful verdict lodged within thy lips,
 " On which thy country's weal depends ! thy choice
 " Sows discord thro' our plains, or gently sooths
 " Our patriotic bands to peace ! Thy choice,
 " Or Hymen, with the Graces shall attend,
 " Or the pale Furies light the nuptial flame."
 And how shall I resolve, when either choice
 Frowns with alternate danger ! On each hand
 I see the deep fermenting storm, that wrecks
 My peace—but with mute eloquence, my heart
 Presses decision. Friendly monitor !
 Dumb guide to wisdom ! Thy successful vote
 At last I find will turn the fatal scale !

Mem. Then it is time, misguided maid, to foil

Aside. The Stygian charm that brews eternal feuds
 Against the coming peace ! The public cause
 And mine are now combin'd : with confidence
 I go to thwart her hopes. [Comes forward.

Sem. Immortal gods !

Kneels Who art thou ? Of this earth, or from above ?
 It was not fancy then ! The voice was thine
 Which even but now I heard, or seem'd to hear !
 Whence and what art thou ? Let not feeble mortals

Sem.

Thy words,

And fly, officious observation, veil'd
 Beneath the covert of the night, to spy,
 (Like some dark fiend, who waits the witching hour
 To shed infection) the disclosing soul;
 But ill becomes my father's seeming friend,
 A person delegated by the gods
 To offices more dignified!

Mem.

I pardon

'This error—'tis the time's mistake—nor thine,
 So far your first conjecture was well founded.
 —I am not what I seem.—

Sem.

Would I could know

Aside.

If he o'erheard my orisons, or not;
 For, if my father knows, I'm lost.

To

What mystery

Mem.

Wouldst thou unfold, that, at this awful hour
 Thou meet'st me here? I did not come to hold
 Converse with aught beneath yon radiant sky.—
 Heavens! are we not allow'd to shed a tear
 Upon a brother's tomb, but midnight eyes,
 Thro' idle curiosity, or worse,
 Infest our lonely walks?

Mem.

Your indignation

Becomes you well. But it is needless now.
 Our meeting was to me the work of chance.
 But what I heard, nor time, nor chance, nor change
 Shall from this bosom wring. Tho' much, perhaps,

(More than you yet surmise) your secret words,
(When none, you thought, was near) alarm'd my soul,
And wak'd a grief which years had lull'd to rest.
—Wonder not that it flows—and for a time
Denies you the discovery.

Sem. Tears! Amazement!

How could the casual breathing of a prayer
In calm deliberation, heard or not
Concern your peace.—A sojourner, an Asian
A few short moons with us ! A foreigner
Born in a climate half the world from us
Remote ?

Mem. Fair maid ! No drop of Persian blood
Flows in those veins ! Full sixteen summers past
O'er this devoted head before I croft
The swelling main, and lost the Grecian name,
(My birthright,) by the doom of cruel Fate
And yet more cruel man, torn from me !—

<i>Sem.</i>		<i>Still</i>
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Your words bewilder,—but excuse me, stranger,
If other proofs, besides your bare assertion
Are needed!—were it my concern.—

Mem.	Full proof
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I could disclose, and will.—The fraud itself
Bears witness to my truth.—

Sem. You speak in riddles
Yourself, your dress, your words, are mystic all.

Mem. A single word dispells the mournful cloud
That hangs upon my fate ! This Persian garb
(A drefs, to either fex adapted well)
Conceals—a woman.

Sem. Gracious Heaven ! A woman !
From whence thy origin. What country claims
Thy birth !

Asph. In far-fam'd Athens once, like you,
I was accounted fair, till wafting grief,
(For yet few years are paft) like winter's rage,
Laid defolate thofe charms, fo boasted once
And 'mongft the lovely daughters of our clime
Not leaft renown'd. You feem to doubt me ftill.
Convince your eyes. *[Opening her bofom.*

I fought this bleft occafion
To trust th' important fecret to your faith.

Sem. Oh Heavens ! I fee it plain ! She is a rival,

Aside. And ſhe or I, am loſt.—

To I'm all amazement !

her. End my perplexity at once, and tell
What fortune ſent you hence to Aſia's ſhore,
From Aſia to Eurotas !

Asph. To that city
Whoſe fleets now ride triumphant round your coaſts,
The ſeat of arts, of eloquence, and arms
I owe my birth. Yet not of Attic ſtem.
—My parents were by race Athenian exiles,

Oft have I heard, and wept the mournful tale
Of Ithomes sad fate.

Sem. More wonders still !

Where will this end ? Thou of Messenian race !

Asp. And of no vulgar one. To Euphaes
Nearly allied. Oh ! had my lofty birth
Inspir'd me with the spirit which belong'd
To that high rank, I ne'er had worn disguise,
Nor past for a plebeian slave, the spy
Of sunburnt swains !

Sem. Say, what disastrous chance
Sent you to Athens ?

Asp. Ask the young Athenian,
Your captive, and your champion, on whose word
Perhaps your country's weal depends, and guess
The rest !

Sem. It is then as I fear'd. *{ Aside,*

Asp. His vows
Upon my fond belief impos'd, the sooner,
As all our meetings were by night conceal'd,
My hapless father had a tincture still
Of regal pride, and would have scorn'd the son
Of Clinias * for his heir !

Sem. And so, perhaps,
Aside. Would mine ! But my poor father's royal blood
Is tainted with vile slavery ; and the son
Of Clinias, in his turn, might scorn me too !

* The father of Alcibiades.

Asp. His vows impos'd upon my virgin heart—
 My shame was known—* my father doom'd me dead.—
 —A faithful slave, partaker of my guilt,
 Attended my escape. In man's disguise
 We stole by moonlight thro' the neighbouring port,
 Where stood a brigantine for SAMOS bound.—
 Our gold obtain'd our passage, and the bark,
 With easy sail, divided the blue wave,
 That sparkled to the moon beam, as she plow'd
 Her foamy course. But, oh! thou conscious moon!
 Pale witness of my guilt, and of my flight,
 Thy radiant light serene, the cloudless sky
 Caus'd our unhappy doom! Oh had the clouds
 From either end of Heaven roll'd o'er our heads,
 And hid our shining sails! Our shining sails
 By a Milesian corsair was descry'd,
 The splendid bucklers, rang'd along her side,
 By fits, thick flashing to the lunar beam
 Glar'd fate upon us, like the comet's blaze,
 As he advanc'd amain;—we yielded soon,
 For his force trebled ours—in Persia's pay.
 To Pharnabazus he his captive sold,
 The noblest far of our barbarian foes.
 A languishing disease had long confin'd
 This Persian lord. Some little skill I learn'd
 In herbs and simples from an hoary fire

* The laws of the Athens assign'd to fathers the power of inflicting capital punishments on their children.

Who dwelt on fair Hymettus, (oft at morn
 My charming walk) was now of sovereign use,
 To the great fatrap. I found out the means
 That rais'd him. With his health, his gratitude,
 To me, commenc'd: he gave me to the king.
 There Æsculapius still (to whom my pray'rs
 With unabating fervour flow'd) return'd
 My vows with every wish'd success; full thrice
 The circling sun had cloth'd Gedrosia's hills
 In summer pride, since next to regal state
 Was mine in Sufa's haughty court: I scorn'd
 These honours, when I felt each languid hour,
 (Tho' rich with many a gift,) the galling chain
 Of slavery, to the warm, ingenuous mind,
 More galling for its splendour. Some dark scheme,
 Some secret preparation 'gainst the weal
 Of my lov'd Athens urg'd me on to speed
 My wish'd return.

I found—wouldst thou believe it?—In the hills
 Of Margiana*, the detested source
 Of all the civil feuds that waste our states
 There, from the mines, near to the Stygian realm
 The pale fiend rises on the day, whose hand
 Sows discord thro' our nations, and dissolves
 That harmony of Greece, which Asia dreads
 Worse than the red-wing'd pestilence which rides
 The burning sky.—With steel and banded fleets

* The civil wars of Greece, promoted by the bribery of Persia.

Bold Xerxes fought our shores. His subtler heir—
 Directs his engines not against our walls
 Our forts, or navies—but against our minds
 And bears down all before him!—

Sem.

Why then here

Delays thy mighty Mission? Why to Athens
 Returnst thou not, to Thebes, to Argos, Corinth,
 And show, what fatal spell, unknown to them
 Brews the dark storm that wrecks them?

Asp.

No design,

No wish of mine to the Laconian shore
 Led my devoted steps, but wayward fate
 Or some kind god that wept Messenia's doom.
 I burn'd for liberty; and long'd, once more
 To see my native country, and expose
 The fatal arts of Persia.—From the court
 Veil'd in the humble habit of a slave
 Feigning a message to the Sardinian court
 Where Tissaphernes rules Ionia's court.
 I journey'd on, and reach'd the Carian shore,
 There in a Rhodian vessel I embark'd
 Bound for the port of * Sunium. Adverse gales
 Drove us to Malea southward, and again
 Doom'd me to cruel bonds a wretched prey.—
 The rest were mingled with the Helot band
 Except a few, whom their more wealthy friends

* Near Athens.

Thought fit to ransom, as for me, thou seest
My fate and knowst my fortune since !—

Sem.

Thy tale

Would call attention from the dead, yet still
Seems it not strange that here you waste away
The precious hours of action, when a voice
Like thunder, calls thee to forsake those woods
And save desponding Greece !

Asp.

Yet wonder not !

My fate, has fixt me here.—You know my birth.—
Deep interest in your fortunes, and your wrongs
A sympathizing pang to see your woes,
Rooted me to this soil like yonder oaks
That wave so awful to the midnight gale.
I saw a manly spirit far diffus'd
Among your tribes.—With transport I perceiv'd
That nothing but religion's mighty charm
Was wanting to enflame the nascent spark
And form that influence, whose potent spell
Gives the due energy. A short exertion
In old Messenia's tribes, to free their hands
I knew, would turn the balance, and incline
Laconia's lords to think on moderate terms
As yet too haughty far.—

Sem.

Great are thy views

And laudable ! Already Athens sends
To warm us with the hope of present aid
And present freedom !

Asp.

Would to all the gods
Another Envoy had been chosen ! I then
Had not been led to this disastrous tale.——

Sem.

I fought it not.

Asp.

Yet thou alone compell'st
The sad recital.——

Sem.

I compell ! I know not
The purport of thy words !——

Asp.

Mistake me not——
I saw thee on a precipice—I knew
The dangers of that honey'd tongue, that flows
With Aspics deadly venom,—tho' disguis'd
Beneath the sweets of Hybla !——

Sem.

What to me
The venom, or its sweets ? Dost thou presume
Upon *my* weakness, measur'd by thine own
Or a few whispers, by the dubious ear,
Heard indistinctly in the midnight hour ?
The business of a list'ner ill accords
With all thy pomp, and high pretext of office ?
From an ignobler passion, low surmise,
Thy seeming friendly caution came !

Asp.

Semanthe,
I can forgive thee—but thou wrong'st me much.
Time long has heal'd the deep corrosive wound,
And I have too much pride to court a man,
Who now, perhaps, contemns me. No.—Those groves,
That tomb shall be my witness, that, for me,

The secret of my birth and sex shall rest
 Unknown. Unless it be, perhaps, thy choice
 To give this Greek the means to triumph o'er
 A maid, who once had not disgrac'd his hand
 —Even in her fall. But tho' to me, my love
 Was death, my wand'rings may to Greece procure
 The glorious means of harmony and peace
 Thro' her unequall'd states.

Sem.

I scorn the office,

And for Messenia's state my zeal would glow,
 Perhaps, as warm as yours!

Asp.

Then lay your hand

Upon your heart ; for, on that pulse that moves
 Your snowy bosom, now, even now, perhaps,
 Thy father's, and his people's weal depends—
 A worthy youth, Philemon, is his choice
 For thee, already to the royal stem
 Ally'd, and powerful in his vote, among
 The tribes of old Messenia. Let thy voice
 Confirm thy father's will ! Like balmy Peace,
 When first she harmoniz'd the new-made world,
 Thou breath'st sweet concord thro' the loyal bands,
 That, on thy brother's doom, look up to thee,
 And on thy choice, to fix a nation's weal !
 —Philemon is thy father's choice. To thee,
 Perhaps our *envoy* may pretend, elate
 With his Athenian birth, and offer'd aid.
 He has a specious person, and the means

To gain the coldest heart. Apollo's grace,
 The lip of Hermes, and the port of Mars.
 But trust not to his vows! ———
 Philemon's spirit soars above the pitch
 Of his obscure and servile doom. The swains
 Revere him as their leader to the field
 After Alcander's fall. *His* name is dear,
 Even as the life-blood to their heart. Should he,
 Admit the bane of dark surmise, his pride
 Might make him raise a faction in the tribes,
 Merely to thwart his rival, and undo
 All that the gods and Athens have perform'd
 For freedom and Messenia. Thus the fate
 Of a whole people were perhaps involv'd
 In his dread efforts of revenge ;

Sem.

From thee

Those precepts ? I accountable to thee
 For aught I do ? And thou, dost thou pretend
 To read my heart ?—Alas ! thou only show'st
 Thine own too plain. Beneath the friendly mask
 Of patriotic zeal ! shalt thou, a stranger,
 Feel for my country more than I ? Should fate,
 Ordain by me, in closer league to join
 Ascending Athens, and our sinking state,
 Shall I oppose it ? But it is not mine,
 Nor thine, alas ! but the Messenian cause.
 It is a father's fiat shall determine
 For me ! To thee and thine officious zeal

I give its due of gratitude ! No more—

But, heed this friendly caution : When a friend

Taxes thy wisdom for advice, employ

Thy choicest stores of prudence in her cause,

And all-th' experience of thy wand'rings gain'd.—

—But should his modesty or pride deny

The expedience—proffer not too rashly thou

Thy service, lest he spurn it, and deny

Belief to thy romantic tale of love,

Of exile, and of Asiatic honours !

Asp. Be it as thou and they decide. For me,
I might have err'd thro' zeal. Even Honesty
Is oft misguided, and some bitter dregs,
Tho' wholesome, mingle in the needful cup
Of counsel !

Seman. As for me, 'tis not of import
What thy designs may be ; at thy best leisure
Frame thy apology ! But other cares
Demand my absence hence.

[*Exit.*

Asp. Go where thou wilt.

Alone. Go ! where thy passions hurry thee along.
Perhaps, where Ruin lurks. Ha !—Is it thus,
That poor Messenia's public friends avow'd,
Consult her safety ; to ferment the storm,
That slumbers yet in peace ; and to confound
The firm confederacy, (just at the point
To close) with new convulsions ? Be it so !
—But I am not in apathy so school'd,

So chill'd with stoic maxims, as to see
 Another reap the harvest of my toil,
 And triumph in my tears, perhaps with pity,
 Insulting pity, to deride my wrong !—
 —Ere she possesses him, first perish all
 Messenia, Sparta, with their hopes and claims
 In one wide ruin, sinking to the fiends !—
 The raging flame that in my bosom glows
 Shall burn down every obstacle, to find him !—
 —But let me yet be calm, and temper well
 My plans with cautious prudence, so to guard
 Public and private ends at once ! For her,
 I know she dare not yet disclose my trust,
 For that would tell her love, enflame the rage
 Of wrong'd Philemon, and incense her fire
 To rouse the storm I mean to lay. But see,
 Her lover comes to seek her.

TO HER PHILEMON.

Asp.

Hail, Philemon !

You come not, if I read your looks aright,
 To water with desponding tears, the urn
 Of him that slumbers here ! What, tho' his fall
 Seem'd, like an earthquake, to disjoint the frame
 Of new-cemented freedom ; yet you stood,
 And, like Alcides, plac'd your mighty hand
 Against th' impending ruin ! Now on thee
 Our tribes rely ; on thee, thy godlike fire,

The father of thy race, Alcides, bends
 A parent's eye ! and with the scrutiny
 Of heavenly minds, observes thy rising thought —
 Applauds the bright ideas, as they form
 In glorious schemes of freedom like his own ! —
 And marks thy soaring soul, the progeny
 Of his great mind, as this majestic port,
 That marks the fam'd Herculean race !

Phil.

Such praise

From such celestial lips, (tho' yet by me
 Unearn'd,) I look on as a stimulant
 In that illustrious course, which heaven's behest
 Calls on me now to enter ! —

Asp.

True, brave youth. —

I had not so address'd thee, but I know
 That thou hast much to do — and much to suffer.

Phil.

Talk'st thou of suffering to a slave. — Alas !

We smile at sufferings — we have suffer'd long !
 What, but the keenest sufferings could impell
 A multitude, to wish their plagues exchanged
 For the worst fiends that iron-handed war
 Brings in her hideous train ? To wish the foe
 Already in our fields, our vineyards all
 Our harvests and our hamlets wrapt in flames
 That, in the conflagration we might 'scape
 Woes more intolerable ? The whips, the scorns
 The contumelious, wanton injuries
 Of proud unfeeling Sparta ? — I have seen

And felt too much of this to be appall'd
 With dread of suffering violence ! Besides
 We now have little to suspect of harm.—
 Even danger smiles upon us !—The Athenians
 By their late envoy, send most flattering terms,
 If true.

Asp. To him your debt of gratitude
 Is ample, and demands a due return.

Phil. As how.—

Asp. The fair Semanthe to his arm.—

Phil. 'Tis true, my friend, and while the life-blood springs
 Thro' this warm heart, I live to thank him.

Asp. She
 Already has repaid him life for life !
 But for her intervention, now perhaps
 His blood had stain'd our Altars, and her prayers
 Were offer'd up with fervour ! Had they rose
 For thee, I think she had not breath'd the vow
 With deeper energy ! and, when they met
 Their due return.—Say, didst thou mark her eyes ?
 What transport there ! but thou, I think, wast absent.

Phil. She has a feeling heart.

Asp. And now my friend,
 Think what thy country claims from thee, thy birth
 Demands no common proof of public love !
 Even should it cross thy dearest hopes, and blast
 The joy most native to thy heart.

Phil. My heart
 Is all my country's.—Is there ought she claims

But to stand foremost in the day of peril
And fill the fallen Alcander's place?

Asp.

For that

A common warrior might suffice!—but he
Whose energy of soul aspires to lead
A people in the arduous paths of fame
Must lead them first in virtue: his example
Must foster those bright sparks of public love
And fan them to a flame, instruct them how
To quell their petty, selfish views, and feel
For all. Else let them never hope to form
A state conspicuous in the list of nations!
'Tis *this*, and *this* alone, that breathes around
That sacred ardour whose felt influence
Wakes in the general breast no common sense
Of public good, that emulative glow
By which the Spartans and Athenians rose
Conspicuous rivals in the lists of fame
Like two bright suns, in one resplendent sphere!
Phil. Why this harangue to me? does Athens claim
More than a just alliance?

Asp.

What she claims

I know not.—But, if aught of heaven descend;
To this once favour'd bosom.—Even from *thee*
That sacrifice the gods expect, which gives
Concord and safety to Messenia's tribes!—

Phil.

Is there a rival chief that claims my post?
—Let him produce his claims!—And judge me then

If public love, or selfish ends inspire

Philemon's views !—

Asp. There is—but arm thy soul

With patience—one, whose wishes interfere

With thine.—

Phil. Mean'st thou the young Athenian ?

Asp. Yes.—

He claims no post of honour, but aspires
To more.

Phil.Semanthe's love ?

Asp. Think not of love.

Think, should'st thou plead thy prior claim, the links

Of new alliance with the Attic state,

He may dissolve. *His* faction governs *there*

Once every moon.

Phil. Is Athens then a tyrant?

Claims she from us, what Sparta durst not claim,

With our own hands to pierce our bleeding hearts.

And read them from our bosoms ? Then, for us,

'Tis better far to cherish, as our lives,

Our antient vassalage, than court new lords !

Our-masters hid their guilt in conscious night,

And came, like prowling wolves, beneath the moon,

To waste our hamlets, and profane our woods

With secret murders ! But our new allies

Resolve to hunt us in the face of day,

If this be true !

Ass. Think what your country claims.

Phil. My country ! Does *she* then command to yield
 Our dearest rights, for which alone we live,
 The priceless boon of heaven, domestic bliss ?
 Is *this* the bright example I am call'd
 To shew our swains ? to teach our trampled slaves
 New lessons of subjection, meaner proofs
 Of low submission ? This our haughty lords,
 In all their hey-day of prosperity
 Yet never dar'd ! Nay, take my hated life !
 For what is life when every comfort flies ?
 Why should I crawl on earth, contemn'd and scorn'd,
 An impotent example of the pride
 And pity of my foe ? O thou, * stern god,
 From whom I draw my being, with contempt
 Repay my fervent prayer, when I disgrace
 Thy name, by such debasement of thy blood !
 I am not yet so friendless. Her old sire,
 The good Aristodemus, will support
 My claim, tho' all the legions, all the fleets
 Of Athens leave us naked to the foe !
 Our friends of Helice are on their march.

Asp. My friend, be calm ! nor with ungovern'd passion
 Disturb the new-form'd league. The haughty lover
 May yet relent !

Phil. And shall I owe to *him*
 The favour of her hand ? *Thou* seem'st to doubt—
 But I am fixt for certainty or death !——

* Hercules.

Asp. Yet—yet be cautious. Let us sound the flood
Before we take the fatal plunge. Be calm—
It may be yet we dread too much!

Phil. From her!—
From her I go to learn my doom, and spy,
If in her cold, averted look I read
A changing heart.

Asp. Meantime, be mine the care
To sound her lover. Here we meet again
To sit in judgment on our country's fate.

End of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

Scene.—An open space in Sparta, before a prison.

EUDEMON—PHÆBIDAS.

Eud. 'Tis now, oh Phæbidas! we feel the loss
Of brave Androcles! By th' eternal gods
Some fiend with folly and pernicious rage
Dashes our counsels! Both our kings at once
You know, are absent, on the frontier bounds
Watching at every pass the coming foe
Like some pale shepherd, on a rock, forlorn
With stunn'd ear list'ning to the land-floods roar

That threats to desolate the plenteous year ! —
 Our Ephori in mute despondence sit
 Or with vile brawls disturb the deep debate —
 By heaven ! to abject Helots all are turn'd ! —
 Some god has robb'd us of our better minds
 And given them to our slaves ! — In yonder woods
 Like nobler savages they growl for freedom
 And Athens listens to their awful voice
 Delighted ! Nay, they say, her envoys there
 Manage, with skill refin'd, the dreadful strain
 And pitch the horrid note so loud and shrill
 That nations tremble at the din ! — O thou
 Great * lion-tamer ! teach thy torpid sons
 How to subdue this monster of the groves
 That yells for carnage !

Phœb. From the northern hills
 Messenia's exiles on the sounding shore
 Of Helice and Bura, boldly spread
 Their Ensigns to the wind, and, but some omens
 Withhold them, it is fear'd, that, long ere now
 By fatal instinct they had found their friends
 Who spurn their chains in old Amyclæ's vale !
 O thou, that o'er the unseen world of horrors
 Rulest paramount, and hurl'st thy dreadful spells
 Thro' the scar'd soul, which, like the spreading plague
 Catches from man to man, till armies fly
 Before embattled nothings.—grant thine aid

* Hercules.

Transfer thy terrours from the Spartan mind
 And send them (like yon fogs that roll away
 Over the dawning hills) upon our foes
 Or all is lost!—

Eud.

By Jove it must not be!

Was it for this the Spartan glory rose
 So formidable to the nations round
 Like a red comet o'er the trembling world
 That the vile hand of a revolted slave
 Should pluck it from the stars, and tread it out
 Like an extinguish'd lamp whose oil is spent?
 —And now, I know, some cold-blood compromise
 Is our dull subject of debate!—for me
 I always blamed the stern and rigid laws
 Which, not content with unremitting toil
 Press'd from our groaning slaves the vital flood
 Mixt with their tears,—but, to submit, to sue
 For league with *them*, what is it; but to blend
 The name of Lacedemon with the dregs
 Of mankind, who along our fruitful fields
 Clank the vile chain of bondage?—If we fall—
 Why—let us fall like Spartans, like the lion
 Which our brave father slew, and not like dogs
 That crouch beneath the blow, and let their lords
 Twist the suspending cord around their necks
 And drag them to their doom—if by *their* aid
 We face the war, oh! never let us hope
 Again to bend them to their ancient state

Of tame servility ! for settled peace
 And unassuming, calm timidity
 That scarcely seem'd to writhe beneath the scourge
 Expect the brow of bold rebellion rais'd
 At every fancy'd wrong ! our quiet groves
 Profan'd with midnight meetings, when they deem
 Some privilege infring'd, or right withheld——
 —And shall we teach their sacrilegious eyes
 To pry into the mystic things of state
 To peep behind the scene, and find, that we
 (Whom, with implicit reverence, like the gods,
 For ages they have worship'd) are but men
 Subject like them to fear, the common prey
 Of every mutinous passion ?

Phel.

Is there aught

In kindness, love, and mutual offices
 Of friendship, and of favour, to command
 Their mutual confidence and love ? If not
 Society is but a rope of sand
 To be untwisted by the coming breeze !
 Had we, by nobler maxims, rul'd our slaves
 They now had wall'd us, like a mound of brass
 Or measur'd equal steps with you to meet
 Th' insulting foe ! But we, alas ! forgetting
 That *we* ourselves are men, and own'd, with them
 A common nature, have deprav'd ourselves,
 And them to savages, by uncouth deeds
 Of cruelty, of wrong, and violence !

Eud. Had these more friendly maxims been adopted
 In other times ! But now, what would they seem
 But the result of abject fear ? The state
 Seems to prefer thy reasoning. Fare thee well.
 We meet no more, till this important crisis
 Is past, for on the winged moments ride
 The doom of Lacedæmon !

[*Exit.*

Phœb.

Now, may heaven

Alone.

Second my purpose ! If I reason right,
 The means are yet my own, (if duly us'd)
 To reconcile those fell domestic foes.
 —God of Cyllene ! teach my lips the art
 Of soothing rage to harmony ! Apollo !
 With thine own magic numbers tune my voice,
 Like thine own son's, who charm'd the silent woods
 To listen and obey. O bid me touch
 The sacred spring of sympathy, the source
 Of every noble sentiment, and warm
 To glorious growth, the full expanding mind
 Like the blest touch of thy benignant beam !

[*Exit.*

S C E N E II.

The inside of a Prison.

ALCANDER—ALONE.

I wonder what delays my doom so long !
 This terrible suspense is worse than death.
 Were I, in any other's power but his
 Whose brother fell by me, I should incline
 To hope they meant remission. But they now
 Spend their invention in new kinds of torture.
 —Perhaps they have found out my birth, and here
 Detain me, as an hostage for the faith
 Of our oppressed helots. Or, they mean,
 By menaces to *me*, of torments new,
 Unheard of pains, and terrible as those
 Inflicted on the Titans by the rage
 Of angry Jove, to bend the Helots down
 To tame submission ! This, if this they mean,
 Would double every pang ! Shall I, the heir
 Of great Alcides, in ignoble bonds,
 Pine here in hopeless gloom, while on my breath,
 (Precarious tenure !) hangs the destiny
 Of poor Messenia, like the gossamer,
 That trembles at the breeze ! Will not my foes

Alc.

Thus hold me, till extremity of age ?—
 Till with my slow, declining spirit, sinks
 The languid flame of liberty, subdued
 By this rare spell of despotism resin'd,
 This fraudulent policy ? or, like the forms
 (Fashion'd in wax by wizard's plastic power
 Of those alive) by slow consuming fires,
 In secret waste, while those, whose shapes they wear
 Confess the horrible decay, nor know
 The cause ! I cannot—cannot bear the thought
 With patience ! I shall find some means to send
 My last, my dearest testament to those
 Who mourn for me ! I'll bid them look to him,
 Who weds the last of the Herculean race,
 Their leader now ! For me, let tortures rend,
 Or slow consuming sorrow waste my frame.—
 —Let *them* look on me as a sacrifice
 Devoted for my people ! Could I think
 They meant to make me a degraded tool,
 A living instrument, a mere machine,
 To play upon a people's hopes and fears,
 And tame a gallant nation on the verge
 Of freedom, to the galling scourge again,
 This hand would soon decide my doom ! But hark,
 Perhaps this instant moment turns the scale !

ENTER A MAN MASQUED.

Alc. I thank thee. Thou art come, I hope, to speed
 A wretche's doom, who trembles not to see

The welcome steel, that sends his soaring soul
 To mingle with his fathers ! He exults
 At instant fate, but dreads the dungeon's gloom,
 And the slow wasting chain ! Be quick and merciful,
 And he will thank you !

Spar. Follow me ! I come

To give thee all thy wish ; but in this cell
 Thy fall were too obscure—thou must be made
 A fearful warning to thy fellow-slaves,
 And teach a wholesome lesson of obedience.

Alc. Then I were short of half my hopes ! Art thou
 More than a man, to force me hence ? I see not
 Who comes to aid thee, and a wretch can die
 Even here ! I will not leave this penal spot,
 (Unless the rigorous hand of force compell me)
 A spectacle to Sparta's haughty sons,
 And poor Messenia's suffering tribes ! Thou seem'st
 Irresolute. But dread me not—my bosom
 Is open to the blow, and I shall bless
 The hand that lays me here, unseen, unknown !
 For well proud Sparta knows, how I'm lov'd
 By the afflicted Helots, and they bear
 Enough already, not to have their woes
 Enhanc'd by mine !

Spar. I'll try a stronger charm

To lure thee hence. [*Unmasks.*] Say, art thou now con-
 vinc'd

That there's no hopes for thee, and that my power
Can call a speedy guard to force you hence ?

Alc. Ha ! Phæbidas ! I would not lift my hand
Against thy life ; nor had thy brother fallen
By me, but in my own defence !

Phab. I know it. —

And, probably, my knowledge even of thee
Exceeds thy thoughts ! Before this period, long
Thy slaughter had aton'd a brother's blood.
—But, let me not be thought to want the touch
Of kindred feeling, when I own his rage
Deserv'd, and drew his fate upon himself.
He lov'd his country—but his fiery zeal
Was indiscreet ; he scorn'd to try the means
Of generous policy, but thought to sweep,
By the strong current of resistless power,
All that oppos'd his favourite views, away ;
He thought, by terror, to obtain, what love,
Humanity, and mercy had ensured !

Alc. Oh had such generous sentiments been his,
He now, perhaps, had liv'd, and thousands more,
(Whose life-blood, shed in wanton sport, distain'd
Our moonlight vales) had now enjoy'd the day.
But other policy prevail'd, and Sparta
Learns, in her turn, to weep !

Phab. Stern Justice claims
Blood, for his blood !

Alc.

I know it, and I stand

Prepar'd to meet my doom ! Let it be sudden,
 And leave all retribution to the gods !
 Perhaps, even *they* may think a people's wrongs
 A full atonement for their sins of old,
 And turn the scale of vengeance !

Phad.

What canst thou

Expect from me in justice, call'd by heaven
 And earth, the avenger of a brother's blood ?

Alc.

It matters not what Justice claims :—to Justice

Sparta has long been deaf ! But for my fate,

I will have earn'd it, and I count it fame !

I might have led my Helots with an arm

Of flesh ! but now my disembodied soul,

With all the Manes of th' immortal line !

Shall fire the van, and marshal them to vengeance !

Phab.

Canst thou, deprest with bondage and with blows,

An abject Helot, burn with patriot love ;

And canst thou glory in thy fall, to soothe

An empty hope of raising servile souls

To cherish liberty ? And what from me,

A Spartan born, will honour claim to match

Our haughty boasts of yet unequal'd virtue ?

Alc.

It calls on blood for blood, a nobler policy,

Than midnight murders, unprovok'd and cool,

Weeding the noblest of our youth away,

Thro' base, unmanly dread : the men, whose spears

In this dread crisis, in the battles' edge

Had stood the shock of Athens ! But, alas !
 Why need I argue with a son of Sparta,
 On justice, and on virtue ?

Phab.

All, perhaps,

Are not the advocates of cruelty
 As thou presumest. There are, who scorn to wield
 The scourge ; there are who would disdain to hunt
 Their slaves in midnight walks, with ruffian blade ;
 There are, who wish to raise their country's glory
 On the broad basis of humanity,
 And mutual deeds of love !

Alc.

Where do they hide

When the stern mandate goes abroad to lay
 Our fields in blood, and bid our matrons weep ?

Phab. Alas ! amid the cry of savage fury

Their milder voice is lost ! Their reason reels
 Amid the gusts of prejudice and passion,
 One only godlike privilege remains,
 By private influence to serve the state.
 Unseen benevolence, like the blest gods,
 Who, tho' to us invisible, dispense
 Their benefits around us. That to me,
 (Mean as I am) this boon is not deny'd,
 I count my greatest glory !

Alc.

Say, canst thou

Change the determin'd purpose of yon wolves ?
 Expell the savage lust for blood ? Command
 The tyger to grow tame, and in his paw

Dandle the kid ? Say, canst thou purge away
 The wrongs, deep-character'd, that glow for years
 In the dark memory, till fermenting long,
 They burst their way in rage ? Canst thou do this ?
 —Then say thou art a god, and tell yon star
 Of morn to rise no more, and bid the dawn
 Forget her hour to shine !

Phæb.

I can do more !

I can at will command the world within,
 Can bid my passions in their full career
 Obey the check of Reason ! when the blood
 Of a fallen brother loud for vengeance calls,
 And raises every holy sentiment
 Of kindred sympathy, within my breast,
 I can attend my country's deeper call
 (A sound more solemn to the purged ear
 Of Reason) and can bid his murtherer—go,
 Free as the winds, to bless a weeping father,
 And turn a people's tears to joy !

Alc.

To me !—

To me this unexpected boon ! I dream.
 From Phæbidas ! A Spartan ! Can it be ?—

Phæb.

Doubt not thy sense, or my fidelity,
 In what I promise. Thou, (at my request)
 Wast given to me in custody, as one
 Whom all our Ephori, with justice deem'd
 The most concern'd to see a brother's blood
 Aton'd at full :—thou'rt number'd with the dead.

For Rumour, (so suborn'd by me) proclaims it.—

—I see the conflict of thy soul ! I know

Thy power among thy friends !

Alc.

Tell me at once

On what conditions must I purchase life !

—Are they not hostile to my people's cause ?

If I must buy a few short hours to breathe

A momentary privilege to view

The blessed sun (if I dare lift my eyes

To that prime orb) at the detested price

Of using my hereditary sway

To rob Messenia of her lofty claims,

If this devoted voice, to slavery tun'd

Must lure the slaves to thralldom down again

From that exalted height to which they soar'd,

Take my devoted blood—'tis freely given,

Ere I seduce them to their bonds again !—

Such life I scorn—altho' with generous views,

With pure, abstracted, public love bestow'd,

I *must* reject it ! rather give me death,

Than life on terms like these ! Thou lovest thy country,

Already have I seen you sacrifice

Thy feelings for a brother's fate. Of me

And of *my* feeling, judge, as of thine own

And sooner give me death than life, if life

Be branded with the shame of base revolt

From poor Messenia's cause, the cause of man !

Phab. Could you confide in Sparta, if my prayers
Prevail'd, even to relax your bondage?

Alc. Never!—

Never! *her* inborn perfidy and pride
Would ne'er relent to those she trode so low!
Nor will I ever give my voice for less
Than equal liberty, unqualified
Alliance!—less were dangerous, for this spirit
Of mutiny has so provok'd our lords
They'll take their time for vengeance, if we swerve
A single moment, from the manly bent—
Then reconcile my fighting duties all
And take my forfeit life!

Phab. Then every hope
Were lost at once—thou bear'st a charmed life—
Thy very hairs are sacred—all the gods
Shed round thy favour'd form an hallow'd awe!
Curst be the hand that wounds thee, when thou art
The solitary spell that holds our tribes
In short, precarious concord! When you fall
Then, then perdition with alternate rage
Swallows her double prey! The fires that glow
At Sparta's crimes would blaze to swift revenge
Break down the barriers of our trembling state
And Athens and Messenia soon would sweep
Our very name away!
Already they believe you dead—your fall
(So far from damping their resolves) sublimes

The flame to tenfold fury—there is left
No hope, but from thy influence !

Alc. Just gods

What shall I think ! on what resolve.

Phab. Relent !

Alc. Honour, my country, and my name forbids !

Phab. One only method then for me remains —

Dreadful—but glorious—to retract my words
Given for thy liberty my soul disdains !—
I here dismiss thee to thy native woods
To join thy friends—no bonds—no ties—but those
That fasten mind to mind, the links of honour,
Of virtue, friendship,—shall I say—of gratitude ?
No—I remit the debt. Thou owest me nought.—
—Go and relume the flame of liberty
Go—triumph in my country's fall—the light
Of Greece, and glory of those latter times !—
For oh ! her fall is certain !

Alc. Let me seek

The Spartan lords, and give my forfeit life !

Phab. No—there is one way left,—no more but this—

Proud Athens—you, her allies, press our state
On every hand around—thy single death
But added to the rising beam, would turn
The scale to our destruction ! To the field
Your kindred armies from the northern bounds
Already bend their march, and burn to join
The war.—Two thousand Helots of thy tribe

Burst from our bleeding bowels, (like the train
That hunt their scaly mother in the seas,
Of Sicily,) and spread destruction round
Answering the havoc of external war
With threats of desolation.—What is left
For me? Shall I survive to bear the blame
Of letting loose a man, sworn to destroy
My country?—No! Since all my eloquence
Is vain, to teach you mercy, here I stand
Prepar'd, in the devouring chasm, to meet
The anger of the hostile gods for all.
That moment then that sees you head your bands
In glittering steel, once more we meet in arms!

Alc. Deem'st thou me such a monster as to lift
A spear, against that generous breast, which gave
Life, liberty, and all to him, who slew
His brother?

Phab. No.—I would not stain thy sword
With blood of mine, nor taint thy better mind,
Nor bid one conscious pang thy bosom wring
For me! The gods, and Fate will find a lance
To finish a devoted life!

Alc. Devoted!

Phab. Last night, with solemn sacrifice and prayer
To all th' infernal gods, that claim the soul
Of those, that for their country fall, my doom
Was fixt beyond recall! I know not *then*
Whether my prayers had power with you or not

To gain thee to the common good. I yet
 Would try the means ; as they have fail'd, I stand
 Devoted for my country, at the sound,
 At the first trump, at the first flight of spears
 That ring along the sky, expect to see
 The incense of my smoking blood ascend
 Pure to the ambient skies, thence to draw down
 Accumulated plagues upon our foes,
 In this dread rite devoted *all* with me.—
 Yet I forgive my blood to thee, as freely
 As I forgave my brother's. And, by heavens !
 I triumph in the glorious chance that gives
 My happy name, to after times, enroll'd
 With Iphigene and Hæmon.*

Alc.

Yet, oh yet

Spare me this conflict, let my blood atone !

Phab. By heaven, I would not to my king forego

The glorious privilege. Farewell, at once !

—Nay go !——

Longer should I detain you. Danger waits,

Perhaps, to intercept your flight ! The star

Of morning sparkles o'er yon piny hill,

And on Eurotas' banks, the morning bird

Laments her antient loss. Away ! away

Before Suspicion's eagle-eye awakes.—

When next we meet—how shall that meeting be?—

Death will be there, and Discord, civil rage

* Devoted for the Trojans and Thebans.

And the dire conflict of contending nations !
 —Thou then, perhaps, may'st triumph to behold
 Red Vengeance, with th' accumulated wrongs
 Of many a summer arm'd, ride thro' our ranks,
 Scattering confusion, havoc, and dismay
 Where'er she goes. But then—remember me—
 For ere the battle's whirlwind sweeps along
 The line, I am no more ! If conquest then
 Attend your arms. And if my vows should fail
 To gain the gods.—indulge not thou the sword
 Too far ! Reflect on Sparta, and revere
 Those rites, and that far-celebrated soil
 Which bred Leonidas ! when thou behold'st
 The mighty mother prostrate, gently raise her
 Respect her reverend hairs, and think of peace !
 Cherish her then remains, and join your power
 With her sad bands in one cemented league
 To check th' Athenians overweening pride !

Alc. Yet hear me Phæbidas ! I cannot go
 On such conditions.

Phab. Stay then, and be lost !
 No more—but think on me—begone, begone,
 The day will overtake us, hence—avaunt
 I hear the tread of early passengers.

[Exeunt severally.]

End of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

ASPASIA—*solus*.

Ha—Empire! glory! well! the time has been
 That love had charms for this Athenian youth!
 But now, a prey to wild, ambitious thoughts
 He dreams of founding kingdoms on the ruins
 Of old Messenia, dreams of future kings
 From his Semanthe to descend! O fall
 How low! to court a slave! but he, alas
 Vain of his splendid talents, holds in scorn
 The voice of reason! Little does he think
 What means are ours to cross him, when he soars
 An eagle-flight to glory! Shall it be
 That I must tamely see my ancient right
 Seiz'd by another? No—whoever scorns
 My prayer, shall feel my power! What! to retire
 And, like a votarist, weep in secret cell
 My ruin'd fortunes, and my blasted hopes,
 Blasted by him! while, with contemptuous pity
 To his young bride he tells the hapless tale
 Of my disastrous love. What tie, what claim
 Compells me to forget such wrongs?—Not Athens
 Proud Athens, from whose sanguinary laws
 I hardly 'scap'd with life! Nor this new realm

This rising state *, beneath the guardian wing
 Of Athens to be form'd, can claim from me
 Regard or reverence ! Shall I stoop to build
 A rivals throne, and mourn my abject lot
 In low obscurity ? Had he adopted
 My safe proposal, he, with me had sway'd
 Messenia's sceptre.—But I still can shew him
 A sample of my power—then if he dare
 To thwart me further, if he still persists
 In causeless infidelity, and scorns
 Those gods that heard his oft repeated vows
 Then, Discord, Rage, and Tumult at their heels
 Shall mingle with that fyren minstrelsie
 Which sooths his mind to short, fallacious peace !
 Soon shall he hear an unexpected call
 To start his soul to madness ! This fair slave,
 Believ'd the fabling message in the name
 Of this young, cruel false one ! fraud with fraud
 Dissimulation meets her sister fiend
 With a like gorgon mask—her passion leads
 Semanthe to the snare, and she absconds.—
 Her sudden sight awakes Philemon's rage ;
 By jealousy inspir'd, he turns the blame
 On his proud rival, of the seeming rape.
 Then, then the buffed lover, in his turn
 Might call to memory his forgotten vows !
 And—should Semanthe ne'er return, the right

* The Messenians or Helots.

Of old Messenia's royalty reverts
 To me, and Athens would afford her aid,
 I have th' ascendant o'er this people's minds
 Already—then Ambition, Love, Revenge
 Were satisfied—but see! Philemon comes
 The father—and a stranger! Now my charms
 Begin to work.— [Retires.

Scene Continues.

ARISTODEMUS, ALCIBIADES, PHILEMON, SPARTAN
 AMBASSADOR, AMPHIDAMAS, AND HELOTS.

ARISTODEMUS—TO THE AMBASSADOR.

We doubt thee not. Thou bear'st the proper ensigns
 Of thine authority—our fears extend
 Far beyond thee.—Of Lacedemon's faith
 We now dispute not, nor their solemn oaths
 Nor leagues, pretend to question—their demeanour
 To others, nought imports to us. We know
 (Fallen as we are beneath the rank of men)
 That we are far too mean to hope or trust
 To peace on equal terms. Do shepherds deign
 To make alliance with the curs that tend
 Their flocks? or bind themselves in solemn league
 To mend their offals, or remit their stripes?—
 They do not think us worthy that respect

Due to their fellow creatures, had not fear
 Taught them another lesson ! and shall we
 Trust to their solemn oaths, tho' doubly bound
 By all the burning thrones beneath the deep ?

Spar. Helot, you have your choice ! it ill becomes
 A Spartan, like a suppliant slave, to bend
 To any power on earth, much less to *thine*
 Come thou, or Athens to our gates at once
 With new conditions, on the lances point
 We give an answer !

Arist. Tarry yet awhile—
 The crisis calls not such resolves—to me
 Now bending to the tomb, my passions cool'd
 By age's wintry hand, it scarce belongs
 To undertake, at such a time, the charge
 Of a high-spirited nation, yet my counsels
 May serve to mitigate the headlong haste
 Of thoughtless youth. Thy reasons have been heard
 And now our friend of Athens claims his time
 To speak—our Helots then shall arbitrate
 The question for themselves—their liberty
 (If ever independence be their lot)
 Must be no fleeting shadow, no proud name
 No glittering phantom to beguile their grasp !
 It must be palpable, well known, secure
 Founded on the broad base of full consent
 Not to be shaken by the potent breath

Of foreign tyrants or domestic pride—

Now speak, Athenian!

Alcib.

Well didst thou conclude

Thy charge, old man! the spirit of our state,

That liberal energy that warms our counsels

Already glows in each Messenian breast,

A people, in deliberation join'd

With their elected king! What more remains

Than—let them boldly speak their thoughts and tell

If they will longer crouch beneath the scourge

Of their proud lords, and bear the cumbrous load

Of insults, wounds, and death; or strike at once

At the tall fabric of Laconian pride,

Nor wait the tardy and deliberate hand

Of time, to sweep the mighty columns down

—The very moment warns—if now they lose

The golden opportunity, let sleep

Oblivious, ever seize them! Now the tide

Returning with full sway, beneath the rule

Of time and stern necessity, invites

The spreading sail! nor let the luring threat

Of gathering storms, deter the daring keel

From this distinguish'd voyage! now the flag

Of Athens leads to freedom, and to fame!

The man, who trembles at the summer, cloud

That wanders o'er the main, nor dares to loose

His cautious anchor, ne'er will reach the coast

Where glory calls him to her opening fane!

—Then why delay? Will yon diurnal lamp
 Arrest his burning wheels, till you resolve
 To seize the precious moment? Will the seasons
 Obey your call in their perennial dance?
 Does rain or sunshine bless your waving fields
 At your request? or do your harvests bend
 Whene'er you chuse to reap the golden grain?
 No—in continual revolution still
 The stormy and serene in turn succeed.
 And all our earnest supplications fail
 To check the stern approach of rugged winter
 With all his furious flaws!—'Tis so with you!
Your glorious harvest now is ripe, and calls
 For the keen sickle. But, if torpid sloth
 Or smooth persuasion slack the nerve of steel
 Or ease delude, perhaps to-morrow's sun
 Brings the contagious mildew, or the storm
 That lays your hopes all waste!—Oh—if a thought
 Worthy of men, has ever warm'd your breasts!
 If ye are aught above the herds that graze—
 Employ the moment!—nay, the beasts that range
 The woods, despise the yoke, and, on the man
 Who madly ventures on their gloomy walks
 Glare independence and disdain! *they* know
 How, on the foreseen danger, to prepare
 The means to guard their young: *they* want the power
 Of combination, and of mutual aid
 Yet they preserve their liberty! they claim

The forest, and the den their own ! they spurn
 The chain, and when they fall, in open fight
 They breathe away their generous souls ! But ye
 Possess the means they want, by mutual signs
 Each others thoughts to know, to calculate
 Each others strength, and brood for years before
 On the great scheme of vengeance and of glory ;
 These are prerogatives of men, they're yours
 If ye be men !

Amph.

We are,—but give us arms

And you shall find us in the bloody fields
 No mean allies,—we do not boast the blood
 Of Hercules in vain !——

Alcib.

Ye shall not want them—

Brave men ! ye shall not want the means to meet
 Your haughty foes,—our fleet that rides at hand
 Waits but the signal to disembark her stores
 And furbish all your files, that your own groves
 Shall wonder at your glory, when ye run
 In full career along your gloomy glades
 And glitter to the day, like the young snake
 That casts her old disguise in early spring
 And o'er the green sward rolls in spiry pride
 A rival to the sun ! The fearful swain
 Flies his approach, and runs to shelter near.
 So will the Spartans tremble at the view
 When first your glittering files become the field !

Spar. The Spartans never tremble ; they may fall——
But dreadful is their fall, even to their foes.

Alcib. That will be seen, when Athens to the field
Sends your revolted subjects !

Phil. Yes—to fight

to Alcib. Your battles—think not, proud Republican,
With all your fire-new gloss of eloquence
To varnish o'er our shame ! Low as we are
Better to be the thralls of Sparta still
Than tools of haughty Athens ! we, 'tis true
Too deeply feel the cruel, galling chain,
And many years have bent us to the yoke !
But fate, and ill success in arms, impos'd
The hard conditions ! we, before we feel
Try'd the decision of the spear, but now
You bid us change our master, by the name
Of liberty, beguil'd ! Such is our change !
For our hereditary lords, a crowd
Of proud Athenian artizans : the sport
Of every faction, whose imperious vote
Might plunge us in the mines beyond the hope
Of day ? And now what glorious privilege
Is ours ? ye give us arms, ye nobly grant
The post of danger—on the fearful edge
Of battle you dispose us first, to blunt
The keen Laconian blade, and labour down
The first dread onset of the Spartan spear !
They waste their fury on their slaves, and come

Like a spent tyger on your level'd pikes
 An easy conquest. What does Sparta grant?
 The privilege of kinsmen, all the dues
 Of the Heraclidæ!—Her choicest bands
 Wait our enrollment in the files—from you
 We gain an empty title of allies
 To gild our chains!—but let the nations tell—
 Go—summons from the isles their envoys here
 They once were crown'd with liberty—let *them*
 Proclaim the blessed fruits of your alliance
 Taxation, robbery, violence and chains,
 Whate'er the ruffian in his rage inflicts!
 —Oh gracious heaven! are we reduc'd so low
 As to renounce the whip and madly chuse
 The chastisement of scorpions in its stead?

Alcib. Who is this talker?—is it thus, Messenians?
 Ye suffer your sound reason to be warped
 By words without a meaning? your resolves
 Turn'd to the lane of children, by the breath
 Of a proud demagogue?

Phil. Is that *your* plea?—
 Now see, as in a mirror, how your state
 Is sway'd by factious breath! perhaps to day
 You vote us allies, and to-morrow, slaves,
 Just as the sky is louring or serene
 And a debauch, or surfeit sours your speakers.
 Or bribes allure them!

Alcib. Heavens ! what demons rule
 Our counsels now ! O that the gods awhile
 Would stop the wheel of fate, whose mighty sway
 Bears down with it the Spartan state ! We then
 From all the broad Ionian ! and the isles
 From this to Asia, could produce such witness
 As soon would send the falsehood to the source
 That bred it !

Phil. Yes,—we know the means too well—
 Nor make a question of your will, to bring
 False witnesses to sanction with their oaths
 Whatever *you* suggest. But say, thou traitor
 To public faith ! What specimens already
 Have you not given us of your perfidy ?
 You, an Ambassador, the public guardian
 Of a whole people's honour, thus, to lure
 A virgin from her home !—It calls aloud
 For vengeance ! vengeance !

Arist. Why, this rage, my son !
 What has provoked such language ! quickly tell
 What meanst thou !

Phil. Too, too well my bursting tears
 Proclaim my meaning, and thy deep disgrace—
 Bid *him*,—yet ere he sends for delegates
 From the confederate isles to vouch his truth—
 —Bid him produce thy daughter !

Arist. He—my daughter !
 Is she not safe within my lodge ?

Phil.

That, time

Will tell!—send to thy home, and seek her there
 Where I have sought in vain and—if she's found
 Call me a felon! an Athenian! one
 Who underneath the consecrated mask
 Of hospitality, with worse than sacrilege
 Plunders his host of his most valued gem!

Alcib. By all the gods—by Nemesis and Jove

Whoe'er thou art, thou wrong'st me, but I go—
 The terms, which you contemn, our conquering state
 Needs not to force on any! Tell thy tribes
 She needs not Helots aid!

[*Going.*]*Arist.*

Yet stay, Athenian!

You move not hence—but, as an hostage here
 We keep thee till my daughter's found

[*Seizing him.*]*Alcib.*

To thee :—

Hostage to thee! instant unhand me, slave!
 Or I will crush thee into dust!

Arist.

Indeed

We yet are slaves, but soon, without the help
 Of Athens, we are called to lift our names
 With Spartans, and with men! If Sparta oft
 Wrong'd us, her wrongs were mixt with conscious night;
 Imperious, haughty as she was, she durst not
 Show the bold brow of injury by day
 Which thou, a delegate from Athens sent,
 Hast dar'd to do!

Alcib.

When thro' your gloomy groves
 Rages the hostile flame, when you behold
 Your hamlets smoaking, and your slaughter'd sons,
 Remember this!—your masters then in vain
 Will battle for their servants! These proud Spartans
 Already for fidelity and truth
 So fam'd! you thought not so, when in contempt
 Of their late edict, brave Alcander fell,
 Fell, by a midnight ruffian!

Phil

He, perhaps!

By his precipitation earn'd his fate! —
 Had he but seen this day, thou hadst not now
 Presum'd as thou hast done! thy boiling blood
 Had paid for poor Semanthe's wrongs! Semanthe!
 Produce her! Traitor! Where hast thou conceal'd
 Thy theft? produce her! or this dagger drinks
 Thy gore!

Alcib.

Some demon sure, the friend of Sparta
 Confounds your minds!

Phil.

Think not with smooth address
 To baulk our just resentment!—or produce
 The virgin, or thou diest!—Why do I rave?—
 Perhaps her voluntary flight attends
 Thy faithful envoy to the Attic coast—
 And shall I waste my life in sighs for *her*?
 O father, pardon me!

Arist.

Afflicted youth!

Be patient! she, perhaps, may still be found,
She is not missing long.

Phil.

Too plain I saw

Her alienated mind! Too soon I mark'd
The signs of soft, seductive art! smooth villain!
This dagger soon shall thank you for the deed!

*[Going to stab him.]**Arist.*

Yet hold! rash man! is this your vow'd respect

*inter-
fering.*

For me, to violate this pledge, to me
Committed? yet perhaps you know not all

*[As the struggle continues, enter Alcander,
they all stand amazed.]*

Arist.

Alcander! dost thou live? or art thou sent
From the blest realms to save our hands from blood?
Oh! do not mock us with unreal hope—
But say thou art my son!

Alc.

I am, I am,

Father, Philemon! my assembled friends!
All wondrous as it seems to see me here
You do not bend your eyes upon a shape
Form'd of the passing air. Behold, and feel
It is Alcander's self!

*Arist.**[Embracing him.]* Mysterious powers!

We saw thee dead! we saw thee stretch'd along
The flaming funeral pile! how cam'st thou here?
How shall we trust our eyes, that saw your corse
All mangled o'er with wounds! yet view thee now

Exulting in proud youth and health ! Say, is it
A dream ! explain the miracle ?

Alc.

Most easy !——

A proud, vindictive man, Androcles nam'd,
(Whom you may well remember, my free words
At old Amyclæ's fane incens'd,) pursued
My homeward steps beneath the rising moon.—
I was beforehand—for I fear'd his purpose
And soon a trusty few in ambush laid
Who gave *him* death, for me design'd ! our hands
In my known vesture soon disguised the dead
And scar'd his face, to keep him long unknown
And pass him for an Helot, (as his friends
Were potent, proud, vindictive as the fiends)
While in his Spartan garb I meant to 'scape,
His brother Phæbidas, along the lawns
With purpose to prevent him, had pursued
His steps, but came too late, a chosen band
Of Spartans follow'd him, their eager search
Soon found me, with the recent marks of blood.
Soon was I known—expecting instant death
I stood collected. But, when pious grief
For his fallen brother had given way, he spoke
In milder mood “ I know my brother's rage
“ Rose high, and nought but blood could quench the flame.
“ Helot, I doubt not, in thine own defence
“ You struck the blow. But shew me where his corse

"Is now dispos'd." My friends had borne him thence
Nor could he, by our strictest search, be found.

Arist. Not on Alcander, but Androcles then
Our honours were bestow'd ! Mysterious heaven.
A slaughter'd Spartan fills the regal urn !—
His ashes slumber with our Kings ! but who
Was conscious to the deed ? will none reveal
The secret ? would our Helots see me spend
Our sacred, incommunicable rites
On the fallen carcase of a foe ?

Amph. To me
The blame is due. 'Twas I the counsel gave.
'Twas I that led the party ; hear my plea,
Condemn then if you can ! I knew Alcander
Was led a captive, and my public love
Led me to fear, lest, were his bondage known
'Twould quash our high resolves and make us pause
Even on the spur of onset, much I fear'd
His precious life might buy ignoble peace—
I gave the counsel. I, by threats and prayers
Bound the important secret on the souls
Of that nocturnal party, till some blow
Were struck, for freedom, and for fame.

Alc. By heavens
My generous friend ! I thank thee ! may my deeds
Answer your lofty expectations !

Arist. Tell
O tell, how could you 'scape immediate death ?

Alc. He thought me stubborn, and, in harsher tone
 "Thou must with me, to answer as thou may'st
 "A deed so daring, else a brother's ghost
 "Would wander unaveng'd!" It nought avail'd
 For me to struggle with my fate. Confin'd
 In dungeon gloom, I long expected death—
 At last the moment came, that gave me life
 And liberty at once.

Amph. Blest be the power
 That gave us such a leader! at a time
 When still the doubtful balance seems to play
 Twixt liberty and bondage! by yon sun,
 By all the powers that watch us as we soar
 From slaves to manhood, it consoles my heart
 That here thou stand'st to check the baleful spell
 Of them, who in the face of all the gods
 With painted passion bid these echoes tell
 Their zeal for liberty; while fell revenge
 While sordid avarice, and more sordid lust
 Cling to their dark'ned souls and lead them on—
 Them, and the brainless herd, to heavier chains
 Beneath their ancient lords!

To I scorn your frowns
Phil. As I detest your views! I know your heart
 The vile contracted seat of dark surmise
 And causeless jealousy! To thee I call
 Alexander! Thou, and thou alone, canst turn

The tide that veers to slavish bonds again
And check our spaniel habits !

Phil. Rancorous slave !

Did not this presence awe me, soon thy tongue
Tho' agonizing in the pangs of death
Should own thy hireling eloquence procur'd
By Attic gold or promises !

Arist. Be calm

I charge you both—your frenzy interrupts
A tale might claim attention from the grave.

Alc. Something, the grave alone shall know, remains—
Meantime, behold me here, free as the winds !—
Without condition, bond, or oath, releas'd
From death, to glad my friends, to lead, them on
To conquest, if they dare the glorious toil !

Alcib. Dare they ? with Athens at their head, the gods
Alone, shall point the limits of their claims.

Alc. They best can tell their limits and their claims !
Their prowess and their aids ! but there *are* limits
The checks of *mind*, which, like a magic spell
Confine the warriors arm, and bind it fast
As yonder trees, long wedded to the soil !
Such are the links that drag me back to Sparta,
Free as I seem ; Free as the birds that sport
In yonder boughs ! But there are bonds, my friend,
(Strong as the linked adamant) that chain
The stern, relentless spirit to its purpose.

Arist. What means my son ? what tyes ?

Alc. Justice and honour.

Honour, the sole possession, which is left
Thy ruin'd house. I prize it though, beyond
The mines of Asia !

Arist. What a strain is this,
That soars so high above the sober tenor
Of mortal things ! Explain yourself, my son !

Alc. I have a friend in bonds—I will not live
To have a father blush to see his son
Breathe out his life, a forfeit to the laws
Of honour, with a vile deserter's name !

Arist. Must I then loose thee ! late so lost, so found
O spare thy father's aged locks ! Too much
Already have I borne ! But this were death,
Distraction !

Alc. Oh ! my father ! can I live
And see the man that sav'd me, fall a victim !
Sav'd me, from worse than death, from torture ! shame,
And vile exposure after death, deny'd
The rites of funeral ?—No ! Amphidamas !
Thou never shalt reproach *me* with the name
Of traitor to my fame. Even thou thyself
Mayst take Philemon's place and mine, if fate
Forbids him to be trusted !

Arist. Say, what friend ?—
How grew the strange dilemma ? are no means
In heaven or earth allow'd us yet to solve
This gordian knot, and save you ?

Alc.

None, but such

As you would spurn!—my generous friend is doom'd,
Doom'd, in my stead, to drain the bitter bowl
Which I expected.

Arist.

Curst alternative!—

How could thy friend deserve it? did he give
A volunteer, his life for thine?

Alc.

Enflam'd

By patriot love, he, self-devoted, falls.
For Sparta, if her tutelary gods
Protect her not, and spare his valued life!

Alcib.

Devoted men! I see your headlong fall

Aside.

To ruin, and the moment seize, while doubt
And perturbation hold your senses bound
To steal from the approaching storm.

[*Exit.**Arist.*

Is nought

In possibility's wide range, to save
His precious life, and yours? O tell me who
And what he is?

Alc.

The brother of the man

Who fought my life! he had me in his power
And tho' both Piety and Vengeance call'd
For retribution, yet he would not strike
(Such his regard to Justice) as he knew
His brother rush'd upon his fate, and call'd
The deadly blow. He must not, shall not dye
I will not breath on such conditions—no—
Farewell my father, ye, my friends, farewell!
And thou! Amphidamas! with constant care

Cherish the vestal flame, and bid it burn
 Conspicuous, bright, as that which fires the souls
 Of your confederate Athens !

Alc. Oh, my son,
 Did you not say, but now, that, should you fall,
 His life could not be sav'd ? And must you perish
 In vain ? Must poor Messenia's royal blood
 Be sold for nought ?

Alc. Alas ! my hapless father !
 He falls a victim to th' infernal gods,
 With solemn rites devoted for the weal
 Of Sparta ! If the powers below receive
 The sacrifice, with omens good ; our fall
 Is the dire consequence, unless a life
 For *you* devoted, stop the fearful chasm
 That opens to receive us ! Can I fall
 More glorious than for *you*, for liberty,
 For glory ? Judge for me, Amphidamas,
 Plead with my father ! Bid him throw aside
 The timid feelings of a partial sire,
 And glow, the patriot, and the upright judge,
 Unprejudic'd, unpassion'd ! I, like him,
 Devote me for my country ! Be my fame,
 My deathless fame, your new-adopted heir,
 And cherish it for me !

Arist. Oh ! yet my friends !
 Amphidamas ! assist me to detain him !——

Will ye permit your hero to return
To certain fate?

Helots. No—no—Our lives shall answer
For his!

Alc. Retire! my inconsiderate friends!
Your kindness pains me. I must not be held,
You may detain my body, but my soul
Shall force its way!

Phil. Is there no means allow'd?

Amph. Alcander's self
Mention'd but now, some other means!

Alc. Yes—means
Which *you* would be the first, Amphidamas,
To spurn!

2 *Hel.* Amphidamas! and what is he,
That *he* should sway our fixt resolves? We own
No other but Alcander for our lord,
After Aristodemus! We request
With one assent, Alcander to declare
What he proposes!

Alc. It requires no sage
To guess the means! Oh father! Oh ye Helots!
Could ye forget your wrongs, could ye but know
The deep distress of Sparta, hem'd around
By foes at every pass, ye would relent,
And join your bands to her's!

Amph. Is it then so?—
But fate has seal'd my lips.

Alc.

Let reason weigh

Our merits, and our wrongs ! the blest effects
Of unexpected love, where Discord rag'd ;
And Gratitude's strong eyes, should we relent !

Amph. I'll speak, altho' I perish.—Say, Alcander,

What reason have we to confide in them,
The ruling passion of whose lives has been
But the continuance of unvary'd wrong,
Oppression, murther, perfidy, and lust ?

Alc.

Send them a bold defiance ! let my life
Victim for victim, please the nether gods
And gain conspicuous omens for the cause
Of liberty and Athens !

Helots.

No—no—no

No royal blood shall fall to please the powers
Beneath—a meaner victim must suffice.

Arist. What hostage do they give to prove their faith ?*Alc.*

They set me free, when in their power !

Arist

What oath ?

Have they appeal'd to any of the gods
The founders of our common race ?

Alc.

They have—

Their Ephori before th' infernal gods
With dreadful imprecations bound their souls
To give us freedom, to inroll our youth
(* Rais'd to the rank of Sparta's men at arms)
In fam'd Laconia's bands—if you refuse

* The Helots used to attend the Spartans in the field as servants.

This offer, nought remains, but I return
To pay that forfeit life which honour claims !

Arist. The people never will permit such proof
Of your high spirit—but what document
What public bond and signature confirm'd
By due authority will you produce
Of this alliance ?

Alc. Be th' alliance void
Unless they give the solemn witness'd bond !

Amph. Can reconciliation dwell with countless wrongs ?

Alc. And what would be th' effect of vengeance, say—
But propagated vengeance, blood and death
From fire to son deriv'd ; if *they* could 'scape
Impending ruin now ? Should Sparta fall
Would our condition be improv'd ? our All
Would then depend on Athens ! say, could we
Hope for a better station in her favour
Than the subjected isles that mourn her yoke
All o'er the wide *Ægean* ? Nay, our state
Were worse ! *We* have no boistrous waves to guard
Our trembling shores, but, hem'd with hostile tribes,
Must live in trepidation, or subside
To the dead level of our fellow slaves
To slavery worse than now ! But should we chuse
The nobler province, to return, for wrongs,
For violence, for treachery, and blood.
Protection, friendship, in the dreadful hour
When Sparta, trembling, looks to us for succour

The genial seed of virtue would produce
 Immortal fruit ! the tide of gratitude
 Would flow for ever, like Eurotas stream !
 The glorious deed would melt their stubborn souls
 Like fire to steel, and mould them into men,
 Else they were monsters, savages, unfit
 To live in harmony with men ! The ills
 That, with close siege have hem'd them long around
 Ere now, have low'r'd their haughty crests, and taught
 The lessons of humanity—if not,
 They have less feeling than those aged trunks
 That own the touch of heaven's ætherial ray
 And spread their lofty honours to the gale !

Amph. Must we confide in this precarious rest ?
 On this uncertain plank embark our all ?
 Where does this worth, this gratitude reside
 On which we must rely ?

Alc. In Phæbidas !

Helot. Enough—enough—proceed, we all attend.

Alc. Let us then, in the presence of the gods
 That smile on virtue, try upon our friends
 Nobly, the great experiment ! do we
 Wish to subdue them ?—Let us aim the blow
 Not at their bodies, but their *minds*—if still
 They feel not in their souls the generous deed
 They would defy the thunder—nay, the powers
 Of heaven, in dreadful synod met above
 Would muster all the enginry of heaven

And in one general explosion, send
Such miscreants from the world !

Amph. Shouldst thou prevail

And they for our beneficence, return
Their usual contumely, how could you
'Midst Helots, lift your head, or dare to plead
For Sparta, or yourself ?

Alc. This life should pay
The forfeit to this hand !—remember, friend !
I am devoted still, if sad reverse
Demands the sacrifice !

Phil. And why mistrust
So much Alcides', mighty line yet place
Such confidence in Athens ? they, be sure
Would still regard with no benignant eye
Revolted slaves, that might revolt again
Slaves, long devoted to their * Dorian foes
By blood, and inclination. Virtue still

To Alc. Survives in Sparta, while *thy* saviour lives
Else, how dost thou survive ? The dark attempt
Against thy life, was but a private wrong
Unsanction'd by the state. To milder thoughts,
Misfortunes and the numerous ills that wait
On life, have tam'd them. Let us, then confirm
Their faltering steps in virtue ! lead them on
Like the paternal eagle who divides
The fleeting air before her callow young
And bids them ride the clouds ! Thus we shall gain

* See note, page 118.

The proud ascendant in the lists of fame ;
 And after times, with long applause shall tell
 How the Laconians, in the lists of blood
 Distinguish'd long above a warring world
 Rais'd their proud heads, while in her sanguine car
 Bellona led them on, and chanted loud
 The song of desolation. But their slaves
 Taught them a nobler lesson, open'd wide
 A brighter track to glory, bade them cast
 Those ruffian virtues to the midnight wolves
 And learn humanity.

Arist. It is a perilous venture—if we fail
 Ruin attends on both !

Alc. And be our fall
 Illustrious, rather by a noble daring
 (Tho' unsuccessful) for the * Dorian name
 Than here to live for ever stigmatiz'd
 As traitors, as deserters to the cause
 Of our old enemies of Ion's race
 Union abhorr'd ! but, if we still remain
 True to this fostering soil, that fed us long
 Our native walks, true to ourselves, our fame
 We must defend, (even with our dearest blood)
 This remnant of the great Herculean name
 A suppliant now for succour ! Shall we stand
 Insensate, while a new Deucalion's flood

* The Spartans and Helots (or Messenians) were both of the Dorian Tribe, as the Athenians were of the Ionian race.

For everwhelms the better light of Greece?
 Forbid it, Honour! and forbid it, Fame!
 Forbid it Thou! whose heavenly guidance here
 Planted the Spartan, and Messenian race
 Fraternal branches, in those happy fields
 Till discord rose between them!

Amph.

Shall we then

Fawn, like the beaten spaniel, on the hand
 Rais'd for correction? Say, would this become
 The race of Hercules? He suffer'd woes
 'Tis true, but woes inflicted by the gods
 He did not labour for the cruel king
 That slew his children! Mention not the gods—
 The gods have planted vengeance in our hands
 Arm'd us with their consuming bolts, and we
 Shall we, like children, fly with terror back
 From the celestial shaft, as if we fear'd
 To wield heaven's enginry, and boldly hurl
 Her vengeance on their heads? 'Tis vengeance; vengeance!
 That sets the *man* above the grazing herd
 And show his native energy of soul!
 For what was memory given, but to record
 Our wrong? or reason, but to guard against
 Such wrongs in future? What, the powers of fancy.
 But, in their proper colours to display them?

Alc. A noble sentiment! but *here* misplac'd

It shows the *man*, I show the greater means
 That bids him rank with *gods*. Forgiveness, friend,

That marks true magnanimity of soul
 Above the lion, and the lynx ; for they
 Have spirits for revenge ; and, rankling deep
 Wrongs in the glowing fancy oft survive
 For many a fullen year, but we are *men* !
 Let us a nobler vengeance seize ! a deed
 To tinge their haughty fronts with honest shame !
 Let us subdue their souls, more glorious far
 Than mere subjection of the shackled limbs
Now may we to such heights of virtue rise
 To such an awful pitch, as Sparta's sons
 Shall never dare to wrong their benefactors
 And deem it equal sacrilege to strike
 At us, as if they meant to wound the gods !

3 Helot. I doubt their faith—and yet I still confide
 In Athens for her aid, if Sparta dare
 Her insults to renew !

Amph. How, Athens aid us !
 When we renounce her league ! futile and false !

Arist. Cease—for behold the delegate of heaven
 Apollo's priest himself in suppliant garb,
 Comes, with the ensigns of his god—revere
 The holy man ! ye Helots !—with respect
 Receive him.

ENTER THE PRIEST OF APOLLO—THE HELOTS MAKE
OBEISANCE.

Priest. Be these the signs of your obedient souls
To the great name of the far-darting god
That god, who clad in humble weeds, like you
Ereft kept Admetus flock, a simple swain;
Who toil'd beneath Laomedon, to build
The walls of Troy, and met a foul return,
Who knew th' indignity and scorn of men.
Tho' rob'd in flame, he walks the ætherial road!
Yet he, that felt such wrongs, and feels them still
By me requires you to relent and save
The state of Sparta—Great Alcides sues
To guard the reliques of his race, else all
Must, with the sons of old Laconia, perish—
For what are you, and that Crissæan band
(Should Lacedæmon sink in night) to keep
The Dorian name alive? When yonder god
(Whose glorious presence o'er your eastern hills
Awoke the woodland choiristers); at eve
Beyond the broad Ionian dips his wheels.
Say, can a little twinkling lamp of heaven
A pensionary planet, on the verge
Of day, with dim and ineffectual fire
Repell the slow-wing'd dragons of the night
That drag her curtain'd car? even such were ye
When Sparta sets in blood, to rise no more!—

Oh! then, obedient to the will of heaven
 Unite your fate to hers! I see your strength
 Assembled here. O let it be to aid us!

Arist. Chosen from our tribes, two thousand valiant youths
 Not inexpert in martial exercise
 But wait the word to arm: their delegates
 Shall answer for themselves!

Phil. May yonder gods
 Forbid, that Dorians, tho' oppressed with wrongs
 Should part from Dorians, and with impious hand
 Destroy themselves and us!

Amph. Flamen! before
 We answer, name your terms!

Priest. Your leader has them
 And that they shall be granted, be yon god
 The witness!
 Ye shall this instant be enroll'd among
 The martial, free-born sons of Sparta's state
 Vested with every privilege that lifts
 The slave to match his lord! The man that claims
 His rank in battle, from that hour is free,
 A slave no more! the rest is outward form
 But needful, with lustration pure to purge
 The servile stain away!

Phil. Then, what remains
 But, give us arms, and try if we can wield
 A Dorian lance?

Priest.

In yon deep vale below

Where, 'mongst embowring woods, with unseen lapse
 Eurotas echoes thro' th' opposing rocks
 And fills with reverential awe profound
 The musing votarist, in the rustic fane
 Of him *, (who deals involuntary fears
 Along the nerves, and sees the demon band
 Of grievly terrors dancing to his pipe
 In soul-astounding gambola), pil'd there lies
 A magazine of arms, to mighty Pan——
 From Argos won when erst our arms repell'd
 The Thyrean's wild invasion. There you'll find
 Selected, holy hands, to deal around
 The dazzling spoils among your willing bands
 And send you glittering thro' your native woods
 Startling your Dryads with the glorious change
 They scarce will know their shepherds !

Phil.

But, behold !

What stranger's that, who comes with looks of haste
 And draws our chief aside ?

Amph.

Whate'er it be

Our common danger, and our common claims
 Forbid all secrecy—divulge your message
 To all, or none !

Arist.

Stranger ! my private ear

Hears no proposal to my friends unknown !
 Their cause and mine are one, the crisis now

* Pan.

All secrecy forbids, and even excludes
 Deliberation ! on the common voice
 Of those brave youths, for instant action leagu'd
 Our fame, our fortune, and our all depends !

Mess. Is there no man, whose sovereign voice compells
 The multitude ? and must I hazard all
 In giving breath to that which brings along
 (When known) the fate of nations ?

Helot. To that youth

[*Pointing to Alcander.*

Apply ! his influence o'er our sylvan tribes
 Is uncontroll'd ! whatever he decides
 Messenia follows,

[*Messenger whispers Alcander.*

Alc. Never ! Helot ! never !

What ! must we court perdition ! fling away
 Our scheme of reconciliation, like a toy
 Of little value, to preserve a band
 By folly led to ruin ?

Mess. Led by you !

Led by your promise ! since I must divulge
 Your shame, before your Helots !—lur'd by leagues
 And oaths, now violated, we forsook
 Our homes, to fight your battles ! now we stand
 Perhaps on ruin's verge, for you, unless
 You instant thro' yon forest force your way
 And mount the steep (where, in the yawning pass
 Laconia's sons oppose us) and hurl down

Perdition on their heads? Ye need no weapons
But those loose rocks, that, with tremendous frown
Threaten the vale!

Alc. We must not risque for them
Our dawning hopes—they fail'd us in our need!

Amph. Will you forget your leagues? ye Helots! say!
Speak for yourselves!

Priest. All, all, I fear, is lost.

Aside. Event accurst!

Alc. The Helots may decide!—
For me—my doom's determin'd! If they join
The band of Helice, my fate is fixt!—
I will not live to see my best friend's life
Given, a devoted sacrifice for me!—
Messenia has her victim too, to buy
Prosperity for blood!

Helots. No—never—never.
Thou shalt not die for us. We go—where'er
You point the way.

Mess. And dare you baffle thus
Your friends? Ungrateful men! No single victim
Atones for this! If Lacedæmon fall
Athens and we with terrible revenge
Will sweep your confines. Now, even now, perhaps,
The dread chastisement of a broken league,
In yonder clouds awaits you. Mark your doom!

[Exit

Amph. Then, ye devoted men ! to ruin go !

Aside. It is not mine to check you ! Why should I
 Draw premature destruction on myself.
 Vain ruin ! Fate is now in full career,
 For yonder, see ! where Demaratus comes ;
 What mean his wild looks, and his breathless signs ?

TO THEM A HELOT.

Ye are betray'd ! Around yon woods I saw
 The banded Spartans march in complete steel ;
 Even now they line the grove !

Arist. Send, and observe !

Now, surely now, at this important crisis,
 They would not venture to infringe their faith,
 And on themselves accumulate the plagues
 To treason due !

[*Helots in confusion.*]

Priest. Stay a single moment

Till rumour yields to truth !

2 Hel. Lead to the fane,

The Argive trophies there will arm our hands,

Or to repel the perfidy of friends,

Or front the public foe !

Priest. Stay but a moment !

Amph. What counsel's this ? Thou canst not surely mean

They should be found defenceless, when the hour

May prove their last !

Priest.

Say, Helot, am I here

Your hostage ? Is my life within your power,
 And dare I utter falsehood ? I that own
 The power of him whose piercing eye pervades
 The secrets of the darkest soul ? Yet wait.—
 —A moment may determine.

ENTER A SPARTAN.

Phil.

Oh, in haste,

Ye Helots ! fly to arms ! the foes advance,
 We spy their dust afar !
 Yon little remnant of despairing Spartans
 Take their last farewell of the golden day,
 Last of the Dorian name, if ye refuse
 To join their band !

Phil.

That is the train, whose march
 Inspir'd the panic terror.

Alc.

Join the foe !

*to the
Helots.*

And they will thank you ; but will never trust
 Revolting slaves ! That proud and popular state,
 So free at home, with servile bonds abroad,
 Her partizans repays.

Helots.

Lead on ! Lead on !

We go where'er you call ! We are not savages,
 But men !

[*Amph. and some Helots consult apart.*]*Arist.*

To you, Philemon and Alcander,
 The conduct of our tribes are given ! To you

The great deposit of the Helots' doom.—

Go ! see them arm'd, and lead them to the field,
Whence the tyrannic hand of time detains
The most unfit for combat. Here I'll stay,
And pray for your success !

[*March to music—Some stay behind.*

How now, Amphidamas,

Say what delays your march ?

Amph.

I want not arms

From Pan ! No causeless terrors are my dread !
Tho' here I mean to stay. My friends suspect
The presents of an enemy. The foe,
Perhaps, is there already.

Arist.

Oh ! thou dastard,

When they return, before thou shalt abide
A dreadful censure.

Amph.

Better from my friends

Than foes. For, what could be my hopes if there
I join'd our lords, but jealousy or hate,
(For well they know I hate them) or a post
Perhaps, of certain death ? But, if I stay,
And—if my fears be true—a remnant still
Is left to keep Messenia's name alive !
If I have wrong'd our masters, this grey head
Alone shall pay the forfeit ! Heaven forefend
The ills I augur ! Be thou witness, Heaven !
Whatever woes invade our rising state,
They are not mine to answer. Wait th' event.

End of the FOURTH ACT. [Exeunt severally.

A C T V.

Scene Continues.

ARISTODEMUS, AMPHIDAMUS, HELOTS.

Arist. Yet all is still and quiet, nought is seen
 Save o'er the tranquil groves the birds of prey
 That tend the falling victim ! But behold
 When the young Asian comes, with changed drefs
 More flowing and majestic ! Like the queen
 Of night he seems, sailing in spotless veil
 between the parting clouds ! A prophet's wreath
 Adorns his brow. He looks not of this earth
 Yet seems his ecstacy disturb'd and wild !
 His fine eyes roll, as if vacuity
 Contain'd some horrid vision. Here he comes !

ENTER ASPASIA.

All hail ! selected band ! no longer doom'd
 To curse the glories of the rising sun
 Whose flaming car to others life and joy
 Dispens'd, but still returns of woe to you !
 No more pale Cynthia you accuse, that led
 The midnight ruffian o'er the tainted dew
 While, stead of silence and the balm of peace

With sweet oblivion of low-thoughted care
 O'er the devoted roof, with haggard eye
 Sate speechless Horror. You no more shall dread
 The keen nocturnal steel, or noon day scourge !
 Ye are dismiss'd to ever during fame !

Arist. Whence this wild strain—the Asian seems possess'd !

Asp. Sound, Clarions, sound ! Let images of war
 Possess your souls ! for see ! beyond your hopes
 The god of bloody trophies leads you on !
 —But soon the conflict ends—too soon it ends—
 Yet, tho' tranquillity along your fields
 Flits, like a dove, on solitary wing
 Tho' envy's self forbid, your name shall live
 To after ages, while Eurotas flows
 In triumph to the main !

Arist. This had been well ;
 After some victory, but now it seems
 A pitch of exultation, premature
 As strange !

Asp. Nay it is strange, and passing strange
 To see the humble swain forsake the shore
 And, like th' amphibious scaly brood, that swim
 The broad Nile, take the flood !—our wars at land
 Are ended—see !—we triumph on the main !
 Even on the proud Palladian element !—
 Our Helots !—mark them, how they brave the foe
 And dye the waves with blood—Eurotas wonders
 At his unusual freight ! the water-nymphs

Welcome their bridegrooms from the shore. The Dryads
 Astonish'd stand upon the woody verge
 In wondering pause !

Arist. And I in awful pause
 No less, to hear thee like the Pythian maid !—

Asp. O sport no longer with our hopes and fears !
 I see the chambers of the deep disclose
 And all the blue-hair'd deities advance
 To meet their new compeers ! O hoary Neptune !
 For whom ascends that pearly-studded car
 With many a gem from Ormus, and from Ind !
 Who guides the reins ? It seems Alcander's self
 Purg'd from mortality, august and large,
 Like young Palemon, rising from the wave !
 And see our Helots all with coral crowns
 Sport thro' the wat'ry element ! Arion
 To his sea-harp attunes, in deathless strains
 Their triumphs ! old Eurotas wafts them down
 To the wide world of waters, See ! they sail
 Thro' the applauding isles ; but why, oh why
 Forbid them on our shores to lift the spear
 And try their fortune on the stable soil ?
 They might have triumph'd on the land — let Tyre
 And Carthage brave the flood !
 Let them explore the treasures of the deep
 But let us combat on the dusty plain
 It best befits the Dorian name—full soon
 Their old Athenian friends at Pylos moor'd

Will view the floating triumph, and admire
The new alliance of the Dorian name!

Arist. Go some, and learn, what tidings! I am fixt
And every pulse is check'd by cold dismay!

[*Exit Helots.*]

Asp. The blue main tells it to the wond'ring stars
In tempest tells it to the hostile fleet
By Malea moor'd! I see another fleet
Waiting to waft you o'er an unknown wave
Where delegated hands the wreaths prepare
Soon to adorn your brows! but other palms
Must first be worn!—The sacrifice begins
The offerings due to Neptune are prepar'd—
Stern god of arms! why that unwonted mask
That hides thy martial terrors? Why prefer
That holy vizor to thy genuine frown?
Why moves thy car so slow? Thy proud steeds champ
And struggle with the rein! but, why conceal
The ruffian's blade beneath the faintly pall?
Thou bloody hypocrite! that holy leer
But ill becomes the leader of debate
And master of misrule!

Arist. What dost thou mean?
Thou seem'st to labour with some horrid theme
Too big for utterance!

Asp. May it ne'er be known!
Conceal it night! in everlasting gloom!—
Soon shall the raven's note your ears profane!

One, to whose voice my soul suspending strains
Are music!

2 Helot.

Yonder, see! the tidings come.

TO THEM—ENTER THIRD HELOT.

Arist. But this is one whose chearful looks declare
How empty are thy visions—tell at once
Have our Messenians reach'd the rustic fane
And met a kind reception from the lords?

3 Helot. As kind as heart could wish—I saw them march
I saw them pass in pairs between the ranks
Of Spartan warriors!

Arist. Ha! that looks not well!

3 Helot. Withhold thy dark surmises—Sparta's faith
Is pure—the power of solemn bonds protects
Our friends! I saw them from the postern gate
Glancing in radiant files along the grove
Now half eclips'd, now glittering on the day
Like these long dormant tribes they seem, that sleep
The winter o'er in low, degraded forms
Till having past the mystic change, they wake
At summer's breezy call, and wing the winds
In gay embroidery, purple, gems, and gold,
Exulting in the warm, paternal ray. —
To soothe the new recruits, the rural pipe
That call'd them oft to toil, at blush of morn

Warbles respondent to the shrill ton'd fife
That fires our martial bands.

Asp.

Soft is thy pipe

O Pan! Its gentle breathings, heard afar
Inviting to the fold the peaceful flock,
Seems to console our sorrows!—but no strain
Of clangorous trump, that wakes the battle's rage!
Is half so dreadful! Oh! resign that pipe—
Its music leads the poor misguided flock
To the dark precipice.—Ye cruel swains!
Say, is it thus ye wash your harmless flocks
And send them, with their costly spoils at once
At random, down the stream? their costly spoils
Had blest you many a year!

Arist.

No more—no more

Hence with thy prophecies, thy noon-day dreams
Ill-boding Maniac!

Asp.

If it be a dream

Yon walls, yon waters, yonder conscious grove
Can witness!

Arist.

Thou, be sure, shalt feel the wrath

Of Sparta.

Asp.

Could I singly fall! my doom

Were welcome! But alas! by gloomy Styx
I meet the grim accusing band, whose fate
(Due partly to my influence,) hurl me down
Among the doubly damn'd!

Arist.

Immortal powers !

Is he distracted or inspir'd ? my blood
Runs cold to hear him !

Asp.

No—ye Helots ! no !

My inspiration's gone.—'Tis now despair,
Shame, horror, and repentance that awoke
Those wailings.—Fly,—Oh fly—and save at least
A remnant of Messenia.

Arist.

Where's the danger ?

Asp.

Could my confession but atone my crime
Or stop the raging sword, already stain'd
In Ithome's best blood ! I could enlarge
Upon my deeds, dilate the dreadful tale
Till ye would start with horror—but escape !—
Fly ! that alone is left you !

Arist.

Why escape ?

Suppose the peril certain,—must we call
The murderers to pursue us ? We, alas !
The refuse of our tribes, are hardly worth
Extermination, our imperious lords
Must still have slaves, in cruelty to train
Their savage brood !

Asp.

To thee, unhappy fire !

Yet flight were safety ! tho' the vulgar tribe
Were overlook'd, or spar'd to till the ground
They water'd with their blood, Alcander's fire
Yet could not hope to 'scape !

Arist.

Alcander's fire !

What of himself? already lost and found
 In one revolving sun? Say, what of him
 If he be seiz'd, or fallen, I would not bear
 The load of life for kingdoms !

Asp.

Rest you still

In your suspense!—I cannot bear to tell
 What heaven reveals! On thee alas! and all
 That share the blood of Aristomenes.
 The sentence is pronounc'd! I would not bear
 The pressure of my guilt a moment more
 But that the fell exterminating sword
 Already red with murder, will dispense
 To me, a stroke of justice !

Arist.

What's thy guilt ?

Asp.

Too great to bear! Beneath the holy mask
 Of inspiration, with unhallow'd voice
 I dar'd to mock the mysteries of heaven
 And utter lying oracles! but that
 Had led to independence, freedom, fame.
 Had that been all! but, with insidious arts
 I scatter'd discord, sow'd dissension's bane
 Among your leaders, for low, selfish ends
 Too tedious to recount—my hatred sprung
 From rival love, (for I bely'd my sex,)
 I lov'd the Attic youth, he hated, spurn'd me
 He scorn'd me for Semanthe.—In revenge
 Philemon's mind with jealous rage I fir'd
 To thwart *his* measures! I with artful wiles

Allur'd Semanthe from her native woods.—
 This was the fair pretext ; that, she remov'd
 The rivals would support the general cause
 And emulation cease. My arts inspir'd
 New rancour 'twixt the rivals. Soon the flame
 Of discord blaz'd around. If you desire
 Atonement in my blood (tho' poor revenge
 For what you soon must suffer) take my blood !
 'Tis yours !——

2 *Helot*. Thy tale, I fear, is true, for Dymas comes !

What horrid vision has disturb'd his brain
 And bristled up his locks ?

ENTER DYMAS.

Dym. Helots ! away !

Treason and murder lurk within those groves !

Arist. What murder, say ! what signs ?

2 *Helot*. Eurotas runs

With blood !

Arist Perhaps, the blood of slaughter'd steers

Or immolated flocks ! why thus disturb

Our yet precarious peace with causeless fears ?

3 *Helot*. Saw'st thou the bodies of these murder'd men ?

Or thou, or I must dream ! the radiant files

I saw parading thro' yon plaintive groves

Were gaudy visions of unreal bands,

The day-dreams of a boy, who in the clouds

Figures unreal armies !

4 *Helot.*

Be thy sight

However clear, the Spartan fraud might post
 This moving pomp, this spectacle of war
 Behind the fane, to favour the deceit
 To personate those bands, whose bodies now
 Perhaps are floating down the plaintive stream !

TO THEM—ENTER FIFTH HELOT.

5 *Helot.* They come ! they come ! O fathers ! haste and see

The triumphs of your sons ! Oh blasting view
 I saw them rolling down the sanguine flood !

Arist.

Saw whom ?

5 *Helot.*

The victims of your impious foes !

Oh Alcibiades ! had we believ'd

Thy words, we had not thus ignobly stood

To see the slaughter'd victims borne along

Nor one is found to drag the freight to land.—

—Alas ! behold the wretched father falls

Bear him away.

[Aristodemus borne out.]

Amph.

Yonder the brother comes

Of fallen Androcles, to pronounce our doom !

TO THEM—PHÆBIDAS.

Phæb. No—to pronounce his own—behold the man

Who led your friends to slaughter ! if my blood

Content you, bid it flow—for I must fall

By your hands or my own ! I bear a life

Long, long devoted to th' infernal gods

For cruel Sparta's weal—for Sparta's weal

Unknowingly, I led your guiltless friends
 To ruin.—The warm confidence I felt
 In Sparta's faith, I bade Alcander feel !—
 For his reliance on my vain surmise
 My fruitless hopes, already has he paid
 With life, and all his basely-murther'd friends
 Atone our follies or our faults with blood !
 Alas ! to save my self-devoted life
 Alcander fell, in vain, lamented youth
 You fell—my blood must flow !

Amph.

Philemon too !

Phab.

Philemon, all !

Amph.

Yet say, unhappy man

How did your counsels sway Alcander's mind ?

Phab. Ah ye curst Ephori ! your dark designs

(While in the smooth and smiling surface still

We plac'd our trust) with deep destruction flow'd

With seeming clemency they lur'd you on

Relax'd their laws, to draw a larger prey

Within the meshes of their bloody toils !

—When seeming ruin over Sparta hung

My country's love impell'd me to devote

Myself a victim to the angry gods.

If so, perhaps, I might have sooth'd their rage

And make them force the Helots from their league

With our stern foes ! Alcander, in my charge

And freed from bonds by me, with grateful heart

Resolv'd to use his influence with his friends

To save our state, to break the menac'd league
 To save his friend, or perish by his side.
 —Behold the consequence!—

Amph

Thy boldness thus

To rush among thy foes, and tell our fate
 So dreadful to thyself; at least approves
 Thy truth—but let the gods, and Athens find
 The guilty in their wrath—for thee to bleed
 Were useless now. —

Phab.

O never, never more

Was such a victim wanted! deeper guilt
 In Sparta for a new atonement calls
 And I embrace my doom with joy! For Sparta
 If thro' all hearts the universal taint
 Of Perfidy and Vice had spread abroad
 Their gangrene? not by all the breathing fumes
 Of Saba, nor by immolated hosts
 Were heaven's acceptance gain'd. — But I have laid
 A train to bring the guilty to their doom
 Those perjur'd Ephori, whose curst advice
 Caus'd this foul treason to humanity
 And poison'd half our troops! To Sparta's king
 And his untainted bands: (who still uphold
 My country's name;) a trusty friend dispatch'd
 Shall tell the traitors names, disclose their guilt
 And shew the proofs. *Their* office soon expires
 And to the people's dread tribunal call'd
 They too shall expiate this disastrous day.

Amph. Live to avenge us !

Phab. Your revenge is sure

Whether I live or dye !

Amph. Oh yet proclaim

In justice to mankind, the dreadful steps

Which led us to our fate.

Phab. I know not all—

Me they suspected, and dispatch'd me thence

To save the bands of Helice—my fears

And doubts were waken'd by the troops delay

Meant to support my onset. I began

To dread, that Athens with Messenia join'd

Had stop'd the march of my auxiliar bands ;

Then, leaving to my second in command

My post, I hurried homeward to prevent

The spreading ruin, and to close the breach

With my devoted life. Ah how unlike

Those imag'd terrors was the direful truth

I found at home ! 'Twas one vast solitude

Dreary and silent, from the city's bounds

To fair Amyclæ ! Rumour's self had lost

Her voice, or faintly told a dubious tale

That all Laconia's military bands

Were must'ring by Eurotas—then the truth—

The dreadful truth came flashing on my mind

At once.—I hasted—but arrived too late.—

Where o'er the dark flood hangs the rustic fane

A shelving passage, arch'd beneath the walls

Admits the murmurs of the passing stream
 Where, dark and gulphy, under bow'ring shades
 It rolls in gloomy whirlpools,—clos'd within
 A troop of bold assassins took their stand ;
 Another cohort lin'd the sacred gate ;
 And, as by pairs the Helots came, assign'd
 The victims to their fellows, far within
 Who gave the deadly stroke, and hurl'd them down
 To welter in the waves.—Meantime, without
 A band of *seeming* Helots, all in arms
 March'd from the postern, in long files, and lin'd
 The parting shades, or mixt in sportive war ;
 Those, to the candidates for arms, *abroad*,
 Seem'd their exulting fellows, clad in steel
 And prompt for action, All around was heard
 The tramp, the timbrel, and the martial life
 In warlike symphony to drown the groans
 Of slaughter—while abroad, in cheerful din
 According clamours, pealing to the stars
 The baffled ear beguil'd. The sylvan screen
 Flinging her canopy athwart the flood
 Deceiv'd the sight, and hid the frequent fall
 Of many a corse thick-plunging in the wave ;
 From an exulting Spartan this I learn'd
 Who triumph'd in the tale.

a Helot. Are all—all—slaughter'd ? can we snatch from fate
 No remnant of our bands ? To arms ! to arms

Ye Helots who survive ! let us revenge
Or join our slaughter'd brethren !

Phab. All in vain !

Are these becoming ardours ! deep around
The grove is lin'd by a determin'd band
Who menace ruin on the coming foe
With level'd spears,—Ye hasten to your doom
For ye may live to foot the your ceaseless toil
With bitter tears, and mourn the hateful boon
Of life, more wretched than your fellows fall !
Their fall was glorious.—To the dreaded flame
Of liberty, that in their bosom burn'd
Victims they fell untimely ! *Ye* may live
For Sparta's cruel policy requires
A nursery of patient slaves, to till
With doubled labour, their detested soil.—
For me, I wish'd to fall in glorious fight
And tinge the point of some Athenian spear
With my devoted gore !—That is deny'd
—Yet have I hope that Sparta may revenge
My fall, and bring these monsters of the state
To bloody justice.—Honour yet survives
In some distinguish'd breasts, by freedom warm'd ;
The gale of public spirit yet will rise
And sweep away the thick-ensanguin'd cloud
Which hides us from the skies.—Oh ! Sparta—yes—
Thou yet art worth atonement, else this stroke

Were vain, and impious folly to the gods!

[Stabs himself.]

Oh my Alcander! if we meet again

Thine awful council of departed heroes

Will grant admission to my gory shade!—

Our cause was *one*, a glorious, public cause

We fell to save our country! [Dies.]

Amph.

And with him

Messenia fell at once! her long career

Is closed at length by Fate's relentless hand!

There lies the man who could have sav'd our tribes

From insult and from ruin, had his power

Been equal to his mild humanity.—

Let us forget our upright form—our name

Of men! let memory die! let hope expire!

Nor hope have we, nor claim, nor country now!

But—if we had, Alcander's hapless fall

And poor Philemon's might afford a theme

To lesson future ages! One, misled

By private friendship, sold that public faith

That awful duty, which he owed his people

To syren sympathy.—Philemon, fir'd

To rage, because a woman frown'd, forgot

He was a man, and basely flung away

In a mad fit of jealousy, the means

Of endless glory. Had they nobly stood

True to the dictates of their reason, firm

Against th' assaults of passion. They had led

Those bands to freedom, whom in death they led
 Down the lamenting stream, whose Naiads mourn
 The man, whom every muse perhaps had crown'd
 With endless glory to succeeding times.—
 But now the work is o'er—the bloody band
 All reeking from the horrid task return!

[Martial music heard at a distance.]

I hear the deadly fiend's triumphant tones!—
 May all the furies speed them on their way
 And hell resound their dirge, whene'er they fall.—
 They must not find us here—hence let us haste
 Where no fell despot checks our falling tears.

[Exit Omnes.]

F I N I S.

INTRODUCTION,

TO THE TWO FOLLOWING

DRAMATIC POEMS.

THE dissipation of the day is gone,
With all her trivial scenes, her trivial sounds
Discordant, various, as the themes that fill
Her ear, still open to the novelties
Of every moment ! they are fled far west
After Hyperion's gaudy wheels ; the cares,
The pleasures frivolous, and anxious toils
As frivolous, awake in other lands
And bustle in his beam, where yet his beam
Dispenses light. They flourish in his smile
And they have charms for others, who delight
To turmoil in the varied chace, for me
I better love, at the still, midnight hour
Amid the pause of nature and of life
To hear the solemn pipe of him, who rules
The rude winds, call his levies to the war
Nocturnal ! Better far I like to hear

The cataract of CLONIO * where it fills
 The concert of the gales in cadence deep,
 Æolian harmony ! or seems to pause
 Respondent to their pause ! they lift the mind
 Like the full organ from the minstrelsie
 Of idleness and youth to graver themes !
 Ye † lovers' hopes, farewell : ye pictur'd scenes
 Of jealousy farewell ! ye sanguine fields
 Ye flows and ebbs of states in former times
 Farewell ! I sing the flow and ebb of souls !
 I sing PRESUMPTION, dashing on the rocks
 Of that eternal barrier (fixt by heaven
 To guard from violence the bounds of right)
 And her gay fragments, scatter'd on the wave,
 I sing DESPONDENCE †, in a baleful calm
 With compass broke, upon the stagnant flood
 With monsters teeming to her frighted eye
 Portentous births, beneath the muffled noon
 Of brazen skies !—Ye martial scenes, farewell
 In Siloams' brook I wash your stains away !—
 CHARGE not the muse with fiction, while she sings
 Of old judicial blindness, mental sleep
 Lethæan, tho' the clamouring elements
 Nay ‡ tho' the height of their proud masonry

* A River near Tullamore.

† Alluding to some subjects of juvenile Poems, by the Author.

‡ The walls of Jericho.

Down thund'ring with stupendous din, untouch'd)
 By dread Bellona's forceful strokes) proclaim'd
 Their sleep a sleep of death, nor deem *his* tale
 An insult to your reason, who, unwarn'd
 By heaven's dread interdict, by heaven, whose hand
 He saw in daily wonders, dar'd the deed
 Illicit, which the sons of Israel mourn'd
 In blood, thrice conquer'd by a feeble foe.
 The FIRST * were victims to their proud contempt
 Of heavenly justice, to destruction brought
 By the dire *sophistry* of Vice matur'd ;
 Self-adulation, self-abuse ! the LAST †
 By earthly love (a fatal passion) led
 Of heavenly mercy to despond, renounc'd
 His reason and his god. When now the cup
 Of blessing, sent by gracious heaven, almost
 Had reach'd his lips, his wild precipitance
 Dash'd the celestial boon away : is this
 A character, the coinage of the muse ?—
 Would heaven it were ! then would the foulest fiend
 That rides the night, and deepens all her glooms
 The deadliest incubus, no more infect
 Our isles ! no more his visionary gall
 Would dash the bowl, his visionary dread
 Of want or infamy, or slighted love
 Or slighted pride would arm the hand no more
 Against the throbbing heart ! O scorn of life !—

* First Drama.

† Second Drama.

Oft in the generous bosom hast thou fixt
 Thy unrelenting fangs ! DESPONDENCE ! Hail
 I know thee by thy fixt and beamless eye
 Thy hollow woe-worn cheek and stealthy pace !
 Yet, all unlovely as thou art * thou charm'st
 The hapless soul who quits her hold on heav'n
 And oft to lawless, oft to ruthless deeds
 Conduct'st him thro' the gloom ! Ah ! who can aid
 With counsel, that ungovernable man
 Whose moon-struck madness, on the friendly tower
 Quenches the flaming beacon, flings away
 His anchor, and presumes to ride the waves
 When all the tempests are abroad ? like him
 Is he, who thinks to stem the storms of life
 Without religion's aid ! and what deprives
 The wretched pilgrim of religious aid,
 And flings him to DESPONDENCE for a cure
 Of all his ills ? Sad cure ! what brings to birth
 That fullen fiend, who quaffs the balmy tide
 Of Hope, and pours in poison in its stead ?
 It is another fiend, PRESUMPTION nam'd,
 Proud mother of a wayward child ! 'Tis she
 Who (still more frantic than old Canaan's race,
 Who trusted in their rampires, and their stores,
 And in their copious springs perennial wealth,
 To bear them thro' the siege, tho' Israel storm'd
 Their walls, for flattery woke while conscience slept

* Written at a time when suicide was very frequent.

Perfume upon a tenement of clay,
 The brittle strength of bones, the nervous net,
 (Curious, but flimsy as the Gossamer
 Against the breath of Heaven) the ceaseless dance
 Of youthful spirits, and the sanguine maze,
 Forgetful of the hand that rolls the tide,
 Thro' all her blue meanders, to the fount
 Of life, and still renews the still consum'd
 With plastic progress; yet forgetful they
 Of hourly admonition from *without*,
 And from *within*, pursue their revels on,
 Waste the bland stores of Nature in debauch,
 And when the means are spent, they go to sale,
 They sell their birthright oft, without a blush,
 They sell the birthright of their country, lost
 To shame! and by the venal vote procure
 Fresh plunder for the harpies of the mind,
 Which plague them into constant vigilance,
 Vivacious still, and craving!—Yet for less.
 Poor Belgia is baptiz'd with blood, and Gaul
 Her blasted vineyards mourns, and yet we sleep
 Secure, as Jericho, when Israel came
 And shook her walls! O sleep! ye Orient gales,
 Sleep on, nor bring the raging pest of GAUL
 Across the surge! O chain the fellest fiend
 Of all the fell, unbridled anarchy,
 Nor let her hither point her deadly rage,
 Tho' we deserve the visitant! we hear

The fall of empire, louder than the fall
 Of Jericho ! We see the dreadful march
 Of Magog *, polar king, predicted long.
 We hear below the subterranean voice
 Of that stern delegate of God, who mines
 His way in central horror, from the sea
 Calabrian, to the broad Ionian surge,
 Perhaps, to measure conquering step by step
 With him who leads the northern legions on,
 And † match the music of his enginry
 With hideous noise, beneath the rooted hills.
 While, as the Hyperborean flag unfurls
 Over proud Rhodope, the crescent pale
 Of Othman fades, with more than wizard charms ;
 And, as the mighty spirit of the deep
 * Repeats his giant warnings, Tyber shrinks,
 And hourly tells his terrors, lest he lose
 His being and his name, or exil'd thence,
 Be doom'd to wander by another shore ! —
 SUCH are the warnings of the moment, ye
 That hear, attend—and ye that scorn, beware.

* Some northern Potentate, mentioned by Ezekiel and St. John, by the name of Magog, who is destined to contribute to the fall of that power, supposed to be the Ottoman Empire, by the Commentators on the Revelations, the Decline and Fall of the Papal and Mahommedon Powers are, by Mede, Newton, Hind, &c. &c. on the Apocalypse shewn to correspond in time.

† The earthquakes of Calabria, and Cirila di Castello, near Rome, in 1783, and 1787.

THE

TEMPLE OF VESTA,

A

DRAMATIC POEM.

A R G U M E N T.

RAHAB, a young Canaaniteſs, the daughter of ADRIEL, (who kept a houſe of reception for travellers) had been inſtructed in the knowledge of the true religion : the Demons, who preſided over the Temple of Jericho, alarmed at this incident, lay a plan for her deſtruction, by which they expect that ſhe would either be expoſed to perſecution, or ſeduced to perfidy ; for this purpoſe they ſet on foot the machinations deſcribed in the progreſs of the poem.*

* Called in the Eaſt a Caravanſerai.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is necessary to observe that the Hebrew word which is usually translated HARLOT, (the common addition to the character of Rahab,) signifies an *inn-keeper*, originally. It is not probable that had she been (as our translation seems to imply) a woman of abandoned character, she would have been thought worthy of an alliance with a prince of Judah.

That the * *Earth* (or at least their native soil) was an object of worship among some of the Canaanitish tribes is at least within the bounds of poetical probability. It is well known, that with their neighbours, the Egyptians, it had a distinguished place among their national deities in very antient times. The *world*, or rather the *soul of the world*, was by them worshiped under a variety of names.

* The Roman name of this goddess is here adopted, a word certainly of Eastern original.

See Cudworth's Intellectual System, Chap. IV. Sect. 18. &c.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

<i>RAMIEL,</i>	}	<i>Spirits of the Earth and Air.</i>
<i>ASMODIA,</i>		
<i>NERGAL,</i>		
<i>KING of JERICHO,</i>	}	<i>Canaanites.</i>
<i>PRIEST of VESTA, or the EARTH,</i>		
<i>SENATORS,</i>		
<i>ADRIEL, father to Rahab,</i>		
<i>ABDON, betrothed to Rahab,</i>		
<i>ELIEZER, his friend,</i>		
<i>ACHAN,</i>	}	<i>Hebrew Spies.</i>
<i>ZALMON,</i>		
<i>TRAVELLERS, guests of Adriel.</i>		
<i>CANAANITES.</i>		
<i>RAHAB.</i>		

Scene—JERICHO.

See Joshua, 2 Chap.

THE TEMPLE OF VESTA.

ACT I.

Scene—The Temple of Vesta, or the EARTH at Jericho.*

Time—The Evening.

RAMIEL, ASMODIA, NERGAL, AND OTHER SPIRITS OF THE
EARTH, AIR, WATER AND FIRE.

Rami. WITH luckiest policy, Demonian powers !
In seeming resignation we have left
Our old distinguished, throne where long the world
Ador'd us, by the name of heroes old
And stellar virtues ; THIS confirms our sway
Thro' all the limits of our old domain
Under proud appellations new bestow'd
By seeming sapient man : a general name

* The Roman name of this deity is chosen in preference to the Oriental, as more popular and futual.

On us our slaves impose, of NATURE, POWER
 (Never beginning, never doom'd to end)
 Of this great mundane mass, upholding all
 Itself upheld by nothing. Still the crowd
 ('Tis true) beneath our old heroic names
 Our deities adore; but wiser men
 Whose grey-hair'd prudence wield the state at will,
 Tho' they support our worship and pretend
 A reverence for our vulgar names, renown'd
 Among the people, yet, by reasoning pride
 Misled, but more by vice, have found a Power
 Irrational * prolific, which sustains
 The varying forms of this prodigious mass
 With eyeless bounty, undistinguished love
 To merit or demerit, good or ill.
 Hence are they freed from every anxious dread
 Of coming retribution, and indulge
 In lust and hard oppression, at their ease,
 As youth or age the varying gust inspires.—
 This BOUNTIFUL mother here, with secret rites
 The nobles worship, rites to none disclos'd,
 But to th' initiate; Night shall soon behold
 Some youths of noblest name admitted here
 To share the knowledge of these mystic things
 The vulgar must not know. The herd, which tills
 The soil, and sweats beneath the noonday load
 (Hewn from the quarry, and with labour borne

* See Cudworth, Chap. I.

To lift yon bulwarks high against the foe)
 These slaves have lost their freedom and their worth,
 Bondmen alike in body and in mind,
 They bear no mark of their great origin
 Celestial, but the upright form, unless
 Some bitter tears, when bondage wrings their souls
 Forgotten soon, when in the sacred fane
 The festive noise of jocund minstrelsie
 Proclaims nocturnal orgies, when the powers
 Of music, love and wine patrol our groves.
 Then every tie of kindred, and of law
 Dissolve beneath the musky hand, unfelt
 Of midnight and her hell-born hags, who spy
 With horrid glee, such sights as blast the morn
 And check almost the sempiternal wheel
 Of mundane things. Thus tho' our names be lost
 Our old imperial names, among the great,
 Our Empire o'er the minds of these proud peers
 Under the favourite name of NATURE, holds
 With links more durable than adamant,
 By the smooth sophistry of vice confirm'd.—
 But these invaders from the banks of Nile
 Must be provided for, therefore your aid
 Ye spirits of the mingling elements !
 Earth, air and water, and the rage of fire
 I claim, how best your subjects to confirm
 In their allegiance, by what charms to lift
 Their ductile minds above the slavish dread

Of these fell rovers of the burning waste
 To whose strange minstrellie the rivers dance
 In uncouth measures to the wond'ring clouds
 And seem to dash the moon !

Ner.

More need have we

To keep the crowd from wild revolt, enflam'd
 By their oppression, and bent down, like beasts,
 Prone to their mother earth !

Asm.

The self same skill

Will serve to manage both, if any skill
 Be needful, where themselves (if to themselves
 Resign'd) will still hold out, if not against
 The warriors steel, against the rigid law
 That combats with their vices. On our power
 We build too much, and with a fruitless care
 (Which this occasion calls not) labour on
 Still to deprave the self-deprav'd.—The powers
 Of habit who denies ? It gives to vice
 Or virtue, as it chances each to aid
 A nerve of steel, insuperably strong !
 The mind, by heaven illumin'd, and confirm'd
 In virtuous habits, tho' the welkin frown
 Tho' friends forsake him, tho' yon elements
 Conspire against him, yet, elated high
 Above the small annoyance, wafts aside
 The pigmy war, with calm, unruffled brow
 And easy effort, like the shepherd swain
 Whose gentle slumbers by an evening cloud

Ner

Of buzzing flies, is broke.—Nor less the soul
 Whom deeds of darkness keep in thralldom sure,
 Tho' nature, all alarm'd, with thund'ring peal
 Clamours at every port of sense, which gives
 An inlet to the mind, tho' clouds distil
 Ambrosial food, tho' Neptune's surge invades
 The rampires of the sky, and lifts their waves
 In proud defiance to the fighting winds
 Tho' Jordan's waters fly before the foot
 Of heaven's proud favourites to the parent spring
 In hoarse retreat, and send from hill to hill
 The solemn warning to the nations round
 To leave their crimes, the soul by habit fixt
 In vice, her whole attention draws within
 And lets the civil war of elements
 In all their wond'rous transmutations, rage
 Without, unheeded.—Hence the glimmering lamp
 Of conscience at the last goes out, unfed
 By this external nourishment, bereft
 By tyrant vice, of that immaculate oil
 Which reason breeds within—then leave the sons
 Of Canaan to themselves, while lust survives
 To rule the young, while selfishness and love
 Of gold, inveterate grown, by thirst of sway
 Enslaves the old, ye have no need to fear
 A partner in your reign.

Ner.

But then, at last

What have we to expect, but to behold

L

(All impotent to save), our vassals made
Public examples of celestial wrath?

Asm. Let them!—for such the strange variety
Of human character, that, tho' a few
May take the warning, and renounce their crimes
A greater number still will brave the hand
Uplifted to destroy, for, such was still
The consequence, even when the sentenc'd walls
Of Sodom flam'd, and such will ever be
While man is man, the sport of every breeze
The slave of habit, tho' his will be free
To chuse or to refuse his weal or woe.—
Meantime, tho' our great foe invades our bounds
With partial inroad, and alarms our states
Here on the frontier, yet our central hold
Of darkness, still his utmost power defies.—

Ner. Who, at the last result, will gain the palm,
To what those various-fortun'd tribes of men
Are yet reserv'd, who knows?

Asm. And how are we
Concern'd? our empire still survives and grows
With still advancing bounds, except alone
Those desert wanderers from the banks of Nile.

Ram. And we must be provided to receive
These wanderers from the Nile, altho' heaven's hand
Fights for them, and our elemental walk
On their account, is hem'd in narrower bounds—
Yet we have room within the cavern'd world

Below, to range at pleasure, to explore
 Her secret hoards, and thence, for our avail
 No despicable aid may be procur'd.
 Be it your province, Asmodai ! to range
 The subterranean world, with your compeers
 And all the fragrant families that drink
 In those green vales, and winding borders long
 Or on the lofty hill's aerial brow
 The salutary lymph, quintessence pure
 Of health, which, mingling their ambrosial stores
 Bid the eye sparkle, and the spirits dance
 New brace the fine, corporeal chords, whose tone
 Respondent to the movements of the mind
 Chimes in glad unison, till all within
 And all without is harmony and health,
 High confidence, heroic energy
 Of mind and body. Hence collect with care
 The steaming soul of all the verdant tribes
 Salubrious, that adorn th' enamel'd sod,
 Or from the hill perfume the morning gale,
 With them, commingle, sever, and distill
 Each hidden virtue, each quintessence pure
 Chalybeate, or saline, gem or stone,
 With those exhal'd, sublim'd, or mixt with care
 Or single (as requir'd) be the pure breath
 Of morn impregnate, and this evening breeze
 That whispers thro' yon palms, and bend their boughs
 In gentle salutation ; Thence the Peers

Of Canaan, as they bend before the shrine
 Of the prime mother Vesta, nature's queen
 Will think these emanations pure ascend
 By her benignant order, to inspire
 Elated thought, that spurns the mundane stage
 And soaring, leaves behind the feeble dread
 Of chance or change, of conquest or of death !—
 Then shall they hymn the bounteous Power that gives
 The transitory boon of sensual joy,
 And short dominion, with a louder lay
 Of triumph o'er their wand'ring foes, who camp
 Among the rocks of Gilgal. Should the sons
 Of vagrant Israel send their proud demand
 With choice of conquest or submission, soon
 With high contempt the message will be hur'd
 In proud defiance back.

[Exeunt Asmodai and other Spirits.]

S C E N E II.

RAMIEL, NERGAL.

Ner. So far thy matchless wisdom and thy care
 For the reception of our Hebrew foes
 Have well provided, Asmodai can forge
 The viewless chain, which draws the willing mind

Already lur'd by vice, but say, what drug
 What mineral charm, or vegetable spell
 Can levy the wild passions to engage
 In black revolt, where reason, awful queen
 Reigns paramount, and pure religion guards
 Against surprize, an heavenly centinel
 That laughs a siege to scorn?—Thou know'st, the foe
 Has gain'd a party even within our walls
 A formidable party, tho' its power
 Be to a solitary breast confin'd
 But that, a match for legions!

Rami.

Far too high

Thou ratest this hindrance, for thou mean'st none else
 But Adriel's daughter, by her fire betroth'd
 To Abdon! oft with mingled grief and rage
 I mourn'd my baffled arts, employ'd in vain
 On her,—confusion blast that ancient swain
 (If man he was) who her allegiance first
 From us withdrew! I saw him, when he came
 To Adriel's hospitable dome; with him
 The numerous caravans of Elam came
 Over the burning waste, secure of harm——
 Yet in his garb and dialect was found
 The genuine stamp of distant IND; his cheek
 Bore the deep tincture of that fervid clime,
 His presence struck, with reverential awe
 Of something more than man;—within the bounds
 Hallowed by his approach, I durst not shew

My visage tho' disguis'd ; The virgin seem'd
 With filial duty, mixt with love, to hear
 His powerful documents, whate'er they were.—
 And since that time, tho' oft in heavenly form
 I try'd to touch her heart, and lure aside
 Her mind from heaven to her allegiance old,
 My charms were all in vain, my arts were lost,—
 Had that old pilgrim still attended near
 Unseen, with ceaseless vigilance, her heart
 Could scarce have been more hostile to the gods
 Of her forefathers !

Ner. At this important crisis, why on her
 Employ your thoughts ; a maid of humble name
 And humbler fortunes ? does it aught import
 The fate of nations, whether she retract
 Her fealty to Israel's god or join
 Her country's foes ?

Rami. If old experience try'd
 In this dark scene (that long has mark'd the range
 Of human fates, and how the ruling hand
 Disposes things, as best to suit his scheme
 Of spreading o'er the world his hated sway)
 May be believ'd, she lives to blast our views.—
 Still as the wasteful plague, at his behest
 Walks forth to scourge his foes, a welcome beam
 Of bright encouragement to those who pay
 His laws their homage due, dispells the gloom
 Of penal darkness.—Witness Goshen's plains

Sun-clad, while Nile with melancholy roar
 Explor'd his passage thro' the mourning lands
 Beneath a starless sky, and Sodom's gates
 Spontaneous opening to the GOOD MAN's flight
 And closing on his foes with fullen sound,
 Reserv'd in durance till th' avenging flame
 Descending swept them thence.—* And Terah's son
 Tho' fugitive, and exil'd in the cause
 Of injur'd deity, yet largely blest
 With rural wealth. Of his posterity
 Joseph, the great support of Egypt's throne
 Who o'er his cruel brethren, pin'd with want
 The noblest triumph of the mind enjoy'd
 The triumph of benevelence and love
 From those examples, cull'd in ancient times
 This sad conclusion flows, that she perhaps
 Who baffles thus our wiles, and singly dares
 To boast allegiance to our mighty foe
 Among our fanes, is conjur'd up to prove
 A bright example of those high rewards
 And honours due to those illustrious names
 Who singularly good, dare stem the tide
 Of vice and folly ;—those who dauntless stand
 Against the current of a giddy world—
 This merits pause.

Ner.

But is there *time* to pause ?
 It calls for swift prevention, for this night
 As Hesper twinkled in the west, I spy'd

* Abraham.

Two strangers, in the garb of rural swains
 Approach the gate; their garments, dust-besprent
 And parched lips seem'd to tell what length of leagues
 Their feet had travers'd, yet they scarce have past
 The gate, (and if I guess aright) are come
 Spies from the Hebrew camp, in foreign mask
 Disguis'd!

Rami. Oh! let them pass! forbid them not!
 —Thou know'st, at this unseasonable hour
 None pass the gate, unless the royal sign
 Obtain admittance—thou, in herald's guise
 Unbar the portal, and to Adriel's house
 Instant conduct them!—there the way-worn man
 From distant Nilus, with the merchant meets
 Who brings the bales of Asia cross the sands
 Of sunny Tadmor to the Menphian shore,—
 On Rahab there I mean my arts to try
 Of various enginry, to threat, to soothe——
 Hard, if a female heart can stand the siege
 Of such confederates!——

Ner. Why to Rahab's doors
 Conduct the strangers? is it meet to bring
 Such fuel to her proud rebellious flame
 Already blazing far beyond its bounds?——

Rami. Leave the result to me, on this I build
 A scheme for all their ruins, or at least
 To bring this virgin, from the ambitious pitch
 Of pride and singularity, to find

An humbler portion—and take thou good heed
To guide the strangers hither,—haste away.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

End of the FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

Scene—An Hall in the House of Adriel.

[*The noise of music and dancing
heard at a distance.*]

ABDON—ALONE.

It must be so!—these raging elements
Resent the outrage of our crimes! the groans
Of a whole people, prest beyond the pitch
Of human sufferance by their haughty lords
Have pierced the centre, and unhinged the powers
That keep th' eternal harmony of things.—
And now, in dreadful discord nature speaks
Of her insulted rights, old Jordan's flood
In fierce antipathy her azure head
High raising o'er the wond'ring hills afar
Declares, in solemn cadence, how she scorns
To lave our sin-polluted borders more

Her liquid pillars touch the clouds ; the clouds
 O'er-canopie our foes triumphant march
 In gloomy grandeur, and along the shores
 Refounds the dreadful warning ! what are we
 Who scorn it still ! are we more dull of sense
 Than rocks and floods ! It seems so—for, alas !—
 Still riot stains our streets, and loud misrule
 Still celebrates the festive hour !—How loud
 They wound the modest ear of night ! this night
 (When to the youths, initiate in her rites
 Of secret horror, Vesta opes her doors)
 Is often mark'd with outrage ! heaven forefend
 That the fell demon of the dusk should lead
 Their footsteps hither !—This to guard, I stand
 Here a fixt sentinel, and mark afar
 The din that thro' this dread nocturnal gloom
 Rises and falls by turns—but hark—our guests
 Have caught the frenzy ! I must either join
 Those orgies, which my inmost soul detests
 Or hence retire, and mark the madding crew !

[Retires.]

S C E N E II.

*The guests enter, their heads crown'd with wreaths of flowers,
they form a circle and sing the following Hymn, Zalmon and
Achan, the two Hebrews, at a distance.*

HYMN TO VESTA, OR THE EARTH.

All hail ! imperial queen !
Parent of every blessing, hail !
By the tendant, seasons drest
In many a varied gorgeous vest,
Shores and oceans interchang'd
In majestic beauty rang'd
The mains alternate ebb and flow
Fields, with deep-enamel'd glow
When April sheds the primrose pale
O'er the reviving scene !——
Spangled thick with many a star
Thy blue pavilion lifts its ample roof
And round thy realm, with constant care
Thy guards, in flaming squadrons, march aloof !
Night relieves the lord of day
Then the moon begins her state

With soft step issuing thro' yon Eastern gate
 And from th' Olympian steep
 Watches o'er thy sleep,
 Till morning sends the modest centinel away,
 With all her twinkling train
 Beyond the western main,
 Till sober evening calls their vigilance again ;
 All, obedient to thy law,
 The predestin'd path pursue
 And with reverential awe
 Bring in turn, the tribute due
 First Orions finger froze
 Decks in dread thy martial form
 Sheds around his wintry store
 Height'ning every awful charm,
 With a crest of wreathed snow
 Gleaming ice thy gorgon shield
 Like some warlike power you show
 Issuing radiant to the field
 Next thy praise the pleiads sing
 While the vernal showers distil
 While the balmy-breathing spring
 Spreads her vest along the hill.

Thy martial terrors now are laid aside
 And from the east thy fire-wing'd paramour
 Bright summer courts thee for his beauteous bride,
 And smiling wins thee to unlock thy store !

He bribes thee with his *Suns*, a fervid train
 Emerging lovely from the lap of morn
 The bright-stold cavalcade thy favour gain
 And in long pomp thy cloudy courts adorn!

Meanwhile the lightly sportive gale

Wafts aside in wanton play

In mid air thy floating veil

Bred gold, and vapours gray.

Soon the red, autumnal star

Crowns the board, and fills the bowl

While thy radiant guards afar,

Sing thy praise from pole to pole,

There they dance their endless round

Vested all in golden light

Where thy wide dominions bound

Meets the verge of ancient night.

Thou with anxious fears to come

Ne'er will tinge the cup of joy,

Nor with dread of future doom

Our extatic dreams annoy!

Hail! benignant empress! hail!

Send us odours, send us wine

Send the lilly of the vale

Round our brows thy roses twine.

*[They all pour Libation in their order, one offers
 the cup to Zalmon, and next to Achan,
 who both refuse it.]*

1 Guest. And who are ye, ungrateful men! who dare
 Thus to renounce that loyalty ye owe
 To your benignant mother? do ye live
 Her pensioners, upon her bounty fed
 Each moment of your lives? does every pulse
 Bear witness to our Queens maternal love
 And can ye still presume to thwart her rites
 To check the hallowed harmony that reigns
 Thro' this vast city in full unison
 Of grateful adoration join'd? declare
 Your names and whence you came, that we may learn
 In what strange climate of the foodful earth
 Our patroness maintains the thankless race
 That spurn her bounty, and defy her power!
Zal. We thank the hand that feeds us; nor deny
 Superior goodness and superior power,
 Nor are religious rites to us unknown,
 Nor are our bosoms so obdur'd by crimes
 As to forget to whom we owe ourselves,
 And what is ours, but to declare our names
 And country, we are yet forbid; our laws
 Forbid us also to adore the gods
 Of strangers!

1 Guest. And is Vesta's name unknown
 To any people, or to any clime
 Is not her bounty felt by all?

Zal. And much
 By some abus'd! but we acknowledge one

No weak dispenser of his gifts to all
 Promiscuous, undistinguish'd, as blind chance
 Or blinder bounty (without justice) bids.
 But one, who in the cause of virtue still
 And for HER sole encouragement, bestows
 His various dispensations, if not here,
 At least, hereafter.

1 Guest. Came you here
 To taste our bounty, and insult our ears
 With fables of futurity, day-dreams
 Implying censure on our conduct? then
 'Tis like ye are not what ye seem! perhaps
 Wanderers, or spies from yonder Hebrew camp
 Egyptian vagabonds, or Arab thieves——
 The state shall know you better, haste ye! come!
 Seize those profaners of our holy rites
 And bear them to the senate.

Zal. Touch us not—
 Our lives are not the playthings of a crowd
 Zealots of a dumb idol, or a name
 They know not what!

2 Guest. Why stand ye thus aloof!

Act. Because a greater power than yet they know
 Restrains them!

1 Guest. That shall be determin'd soon
 To your confusion.

[As they are going to seize them, four young Patricians come in (supposed of the party newly initiated in the secret rites of Vesta) all the guests disperse, except Zalmon and Achan.]

*Zal. to
Achan.*

How the dastards fly!—

Great God! who bade their haughty tyrants shew
Their formidable aspects here, to chace
The trembling cowards hence! thy name we hail
And blest in thy protection stand our ground!

ENTER ABDON.

O what avail'd my vigilance, my care
To keep the greedy hand of savage spoil
And lordly rapine from these doors! O lost
For ever lost! Oh Rahab! what shall guard
Thy virgin sanctity from outrage now?
I fear the fame of thy distinguish'd charms
Has wander'd forth, and fir'd the lordly crew—
O for an angel's hand to lead her hence!
O for an angel's hand to touch their eyes
With blindness! as the men of Sodom erst
When Abram's kinsman with the virgin pair
Trembling escap'd to Zoar! But be still
My apprehension! lest I guide the search
Even by my terrors to the panting prey
Which I would wish conceal'd! Her father's friends,
My friends I'll summon ere I lose her thus—
Or they, or I shall fall!

[Exit.]

1 *Pat.* [*Entering and looking around.*] Here late we heard

The voice of Revelry. Now all is hush'd,
And still. The crowd is all dispers'd, but two,
And who are they? They wear a foreign garb!

To them. Say, strangers! where is all the crew who join'd
So late in jovial clamour? hence the noise
Seem'd to proceed, but interrupted soon
By strains, unseemly on this festive night!

Zal. We know not, we are strangers to your rites,
As to the tenor of your questions.

2 *Pat.* Whence,
And who are ye?

Ach. It boots not to declare
Our name or nation: in this public haunt
Of strangers, and promiscuous guests, from climes
And nations far remote, it were a task
Irkfome and endless to enquire their names!

2 *Pat.* Do ye presume to dally with your fate,
By dark evasion, and to wear that look
Of proud defiance too? Do ye not know
That in our bosoms rests the dread award
Of life and death?

Zal. Your hand you cannot stretch
But by permission of an higher power,
And he, besure, will take a strict account
Whene'er against the hospitable law
Ye dare to lift it, or employ its force
To violate the stranger.

1 *Pat.* Brother, come——

This is some vender of dry proverbs; fed not sat
By wondering rustics with precarious meals
For selling wisdom by penurious scraps;
In pompous phrase, thro' cots and hamlets poor,
And now, his overweening pride conducts
This pedant to the capital, inspir'd
With empty hope a better mart to find
For his insipid ware.

3 *Pat.* Avaunt!

2 *Pat.* Begone!

Go hunt for hearers in the fordid haunts
Of rustic wonderment! we have in view
A nobler game! [Exeunt Patricians.]

Zal. What mean the brain-sick boys,
Is it with native insolence, or wine,
Or the hot fallies of impetuous youth,
Their pride is lifted up so high?—

Ach. Whate'er
The cause, they seem (all boastful as they are)
Devoid of native courage: did you mark
When you put on that lion-look, which marks
The race of Judah. how the colour fled
From the flush'd cheek, and Terror took her turn
To dim the sparkling insolence, that flam'd
In every glance?

Zal. I did.—But all the guests,
Methinks, are fled!—What must the treatment be

That thus has crush'd the manly spirit down,
 (And spite of the angelic form) depress'd
 To the low level of the trodden worm
 That darts into the cover, when he sees
 The majesty of man approach ! Those slaves
 Are hardly worth a conquest, and their blood
 Would but disgrace our swords, but that the will
 Of heaven ordains to hold the miscreants up,
 To after ages, an example dread
 Of what THEY may expect, who float along
 In the strong tide of tyranny and vice.—
 But hark—a noise within !—We soon shall learn
 The glorious cause, which brought those patriots forth,
 For what redress of wrongs, what splendid acts
 Of charity or valour they forsook,
 At this dark hour, the orgies of their gods !

Rahab Help all ye pitying powers on high ! Defend
within. My weakness, or I'm lost ! Oh Abdon, Abdon,
 Where at this sad, disastrous hour art thou ?
 Oh father, father !—But why call in vain
 Father or friend, to rush on certain fate ?

Pat. No, no—not here—another temple waits
within. A victim so illustrious ! Heavens !—what charms,

[*She is dragged out by two of the patricians.*]

What dignity of scorn, what loveliness,
 O'er all her form ! My struggling fair-one ! come.
 It grieves us much, that to our lot it falls
 To seize you as a criminal of state,

An open scorner of your country's gods !
 And you, at this late hour, must come before
 Th' assembled states, and answer to your charge.

3 *Pat.* Or if your virgin modesty refuse
 To grace the senate with your presence *now*,
 Our order is to lead you to a place
 Of safety, and attend you there till morn !

Rab. O thou ! who bad'st the Red Sea part before
 Thy chosen armies ! grant a way for me
 To 'scape this shame, or send deliverance down,
 From those !—

4 *Pat.* Stop her audacious mouth ! She speaks
 Nothing but blasphemy !

[*Zalmon and Achan appear.*]

Zal. Thy prayers are heard,
 Forsaken maid ! but not o'erlook'd by heaven !

Ach. Heavens ! what a form ! and is it thus you treat
 The stamp of Heaven's own hand, when it appears
 Amongst you ?

1 *Pat.* Who are you ? Confusion—Here
 Again ! Plebeians ! go ! and find your cells.
 What make you here at this dark hour ? Avaunt,
 Hide your obscurities in kindred gloom,
 Or this right hand shall mix you with the dust
 From whence you sprung !

Zal. Unhand your trembling prey
 And go in peace ! proclaim your glorious deeds
 Your piety and justice in the fanes

Of your great deities, with all their priests
Around!—What! has amazement ty'd your tongues?

2 Pat. *[Drawing a sword.]*

It has not bound our hands, as ye shall find
Audacious ruffians!

Rab. Oh! in pity, heaven!

Prevent a scene of bloodshed, or let me
Be the first victim!—

3 Pat. Seeming modesty!

Are these thy favour'd guards? but they full soon
Their proud temerity shall mourn.

[Zalmon and Achan each draw a concealed sword.]

Zal. Fall on!

We are not us'd to tremble at the frown
Of proud nobility!

2 Pat. Is it even so?

[They engage: Zalmon and Achan beat them off.]

Zal. *[To the Patricians going out.]*

Nay more—ye violators! learn from us
(And think by us heaven thunders in your ears
The dreadful warning) that your crimes are full
And here your chastisement begins!

[Ex. Patricians.]

Ach. Tongue-valiant heroes! is it thus your hands
Maintain the mischief of your hearts? would heaven
That vice would always vindicate her cause
By such effeminate bravoos, silken sons
Of Luxury and Sloth! They roam the street

At the wild voice of Riot, and appall
 With empty threat, the reptile race who chance
 To crawl across their way, but shrink before
 The warrior's frown, and to their covert fly,
 Like timorous deer !

Zal. But you, perhaps, have wrong'd
 Their valour, stand upon your guard—for here
 They come again !

To Take courage ! gentle maid,
Rab. Thy guardian is the same with ours ; that God
 In whom (with glad surprise) we find you trust.

Rab. Nor trust in vain, for lo ! benignant heaven
 Has deign'd us other aid. Oh Abdon ! friend.

ENTER ABDON AND CANAANTES.

Behold and thank my favours ! sent by him
 Whose piercing look pervades the deepest gloom,
 And smites the ruffian's hand (uprais'd to strike)
 With nameless terrors !

Abd. To that God be praise,
 God of the stranger and forlorn ! To him
 My orisons shall ever rise, his laws
 My life shall still obey ! Oh take my thanks,
 Accept my heart, my life, 'tis yours, 'tis HIS,
 Who nerv'd your arms to combat for a life
 So dear to me, and dearer far than life !—

To Her honour ! In my dread for thee, I flew
Rahab. To rouse those faithful friends to the defence

Zal.

Abd.

Of this asylum of my dearest hopes !
 I met the violators in their flight,
 But, oh ! what signs of horror mark'd their looks,
 Distinguish'd thro' the gloom ! They were not worth
 Revenge ! we let them pass, to head around
 The panic where they flew ; I thence dispatch'd
 A faithful friend, to dog them at the heels,
 And give the signal, lest their coward fears
 Should yield at last to Reason's calmer sway,
 And urge them on to try their fate again
 With new confederates, and augmented rage.
 Lest this should happen, thou, my love ! retire,
 And we, assisted by those generous friends,
 (But most by that benignant power who led
 Their blessed footsteps hither) shall protect
 Thy life and honour both !

[Exit Rahab.]

Zal.

But, who is he

Who comes with such important looks of haste !—
 His eye speaks wonder ; but we know not yet
 Whether his coming bodes alarm or joy.

ENTER ELIEZER.

Abd.

Ha—Eliezer—tell at once what cause
 Brings you so soon with such unusual looks
 Of terror and surprize ? Are we to fly,
 Or is our flight restrain'd ? Thou wast not wont
 To tremble with a woman's palsy thus,
 At every rumour !

Eli.

'Tis no trivial cause,

Nor fear, that sent me on such breathless haste,
 Let no unfounded terror slack your hands,
 There is no cause of dread ! The panic cloud
 Which lately hover'd o'er this trembling roof,
 Invades your foes, and o'er the city spreads
 With the contagion of a pestilence,
 That walks the streets at noon, and sweeps along
 A people with their king !

Abd.

What wondrous cause

Has sent this terror in a moment round ?

Eli.

The young patricians, from those doors expell'd,
 And baffled in their foul attempt, by powers
 Above all mortal prowess (as they deem)
 Have found an ebb of insolence, and now
 Fanatic frenzy, in full tide, comes in—
 Her heady current sweeps away the bound
 Of vanquish'd reason. Even the senate reels
 ('Tis said) beneath her influence, inspir'd
 By those intrepid warriors ; and the night
 Confounding, mingling, magnifying all,
 Dilates the deadly phantoms of the mind
 To giant size !

Abd.

Oh ! righteous Heaven ! your names

(More potent than the dreadful syllables
 Which call'd the cloud-born pestilence) possess
 The force of armies, and unhinge the strength

Of Canaan's noblest state ! Say, who are ye,
Angels or men ?

Zal. Whate'er we are, to you
We promise safety, in the awful name
Of him, who scatters armies, with a word,
Potent as whirlwinds, (whose infuriate breath
Levels the woods tall files,) if ye observe
What we direct, and gather all your friends
To this heaven-favour'd roof.

Abd. I go — I fly.
Haste, Eliezer, help me to collect
The partners of our heart, and of our hope,
Who long have groan'd beneath the lifted scourge
Of our unfeeling lords ! yes tyrants ! yes
I see, I feel—your doom, at last is near—
The dreadful harvest of your crimes is ripe,
It reaches to the clouds, its root in hell,
Sown by the fiends ! but soon the deadly scythe
Of Desolation comes to lay you low
In common ruin, yet I mourn your fall,
And would prevent it if I could !

[*Exeunt Abdon and friends.*]

ACHAN—ZALMON.

Ach. Now, Zalmon !
Why stand you thus in calm tranquillity,
As if confiding in your strength, you held
The dreadful bolt of heaven yourself ?—but think
One moment, think, upon what slippery ground

We stand ; our names, our phantoms rather spread
 Confusion's panic thro' the streets—afar
 We seem terrific shadows thro' the gloom
 Of double night, that for a moment lasts,
 (This mental darkness, with a starless sky
 In horror blended,) but the springing dawn
 Of reason, (which a moment may produce)
 A single spark, by accident or chance
 Lightning the dusk, will shew us what we are
 Detected to the eye of sober sense,
 And to mere mortals dwindled down at last,
 We that now wear the garb of gods !—what then
 Remains, but by a secret embassy
 To rouse the slumb'ring host, and lead them on
 To take the 'vantage of the dreadful hour
 And scale the walls, or force the guardless gates
 Ere yet the tumult to a calm subsides
 And reason re-assumes her throne ?——

Zal.

Shall I

Or thou presume to mix, with daring hand
 The little views of human policy
 With heaven's tremendous counsels ? art thou sure
 That these nocturnal stratagems and thefts
 Of war, will best fulfil the great designs
 Of Providence ? Her judgments she displays
 Conspicuous in the presence of the sun
 Conspicuous, as her mercies !—martial flights
 And frauds, she deigns not to adopt, for man

And man's short-sighted wisdom, are forbid
 Among the glories of th' Almighty's plan
 To mix its earthly, and unhallow'd dregs :
 The worldly warrior all advantage takes
 To sate his lust of fame, or lust of gold
 But we, Heaven's delegates, for nobler ends
 Brandish the consecrated steel.—For heaven,
 And to assert her violated laws :
 Not in vain brass or monumental stone
 To rank with demigods, we take the field !—
 Not with accumulated plunder gain'd
 From burning hamlets, and dismantled towns
 To purchase from the mercenary bard
 The pomp of adulation.—Nightly frauds !——
 Would they not seem as if omnipotence
 Wanted the aid of stratagem ? would this
 Become the dreadful name, or tend to aid
 The glorious cause for which he clove the deep
 And walk'd the troubled ooze in flames ! the cause
 Of virtue, of humanity, the cause
 Of moral excellence, each heavenly gift,
 That lifts us from the dust to tread the stars !—
 Leave the result to heaven ! the cause is his
 And let the means be his !

Ach.

Yet you forget

That in the fervour of mistaken zeal
 That error, which in others you accuse
 Becomes your own adoption !——

Zal.

Friend! you speak

In riddles—but explain.

Ach.

You justly blame

That man's presumption, who aspires to mix
 His counsels with the deep, mysterious scheme
 Of him, whose will determines all below ;
 Yet you yourself (nay hear me out my friend
 With patience!) tho' in piety and zeal
 For heaven, to none inferior, yet seduc'd
 Even by your boasted piety, presume
 Heaven's movements to constrain, to guide the hand
 Omnipotent, with dictatorial voice
 Which seems to say, *Those are your proper bounds ;*
This line and this alone, thou shalt pursue ;
No star shall gaze on thy nocturnal march !
Night still must slumber on her ebony throne
And ne'er behold thy majesty, amaz'd.——
Thy glories rising with the rising sun
With him shall climb the steep ascent of noon
And dazzle his meridian beams—is this
 The genuine language of thy heart, or no ?
 Would'st thou prescribe to heaven ? wilt thou deny
 That this deep frenzy of the soul, that raves
 Around those battlements, whose voice even now
 We hear,—was sent by heaven, to chase away
 The shadow of resistance, and to call
 The slumb'ring host, with no unmeaning voice

To seize the instant moment? shall we lose
The crisis by your sloth, or causeless fear?

Zal. Achan! you know, that heaven, not man—commands
My reverence, and my dread, I fear the taint
Of wrong, and that alone!

Ach. I know your courage;
I know thou feel'st the honourable dread
Of leaving thy appointed post; but think
What strictest duty claims, nay what our Chief
Himself expects at this important hour!
Say! ought he not to know this sudden change
At this conjuncture, and in judgment sit
Upon the sum of things himself? To him
And not to us, the mighty privilege
Belongs, of judging what is right and fit,
Whether to take advantage of their fears
And pour on his already frightened foes
Treble confusion, or to wait the hour,
When this dread hurricane subsides, and seize
The smiling moment of fallacious calm
With unexpected rage to strike the blow
Like thunder, bursting from a cloudless sky——
Consider this—lest your too rigid sense
Of duty, turn to blame, when Joshua hears
That golden opportunities were lost
By our rash confidence, or coward fear——
For so the world will construe our delay
If we should linger here.

Zal. But who shall go?

Shall one, or both?

Ach. Our sudden flight would cause
New panics to the crowd, to find us now
Confronting their patrician pride, and now
Vanish'd they know not how, would make us thought
Somewhat above humanity, and rouse
Their fears to frenzy!

Zal. But, to leave the maid
In jeopardy!

Ach. Ha! is it so! my friend
aside. I fear'd as much!—[*To Zalmon.*] and is it here
'The zeal of Zalmon points? In Abdon's guard
'The maid, I think is safe!—

Zal. And wouldst thou cast
On me the foul suspicion, that my feet
Are fetter'd by the myrtle bands of love?
'That low degenerate passions quench my zeal
For Israel's glory! Tho' to go or stay
Is in my option, and my will mine own
Yet to convince you, and the world, how much
Zalmon the imputation scorns, that love
Should warp him from his duty, (love, by heaven
Unsanctioned) where the voice of glory calls
And Israel's cause, I go, and leave the field
To thee! do thou my friend, respect thyself!
And that ensures thy duty to thy God
To Israel, and thy friend!—I leave to thee

This lovely maid ! revere her plighted vows,
 Protect her virtues, and regard her love !
 Think that her lover is our best ally
 And heaven will still protect thee, as before !
 I soon will come, before their fear subsides
 With a selected band to rescue thee. *Exit.*

ACHAN—*SOLUS.*

He too suspects my love ! yet leaves me here
 In full possession of the lovely prize !——
 What does this mean ? my utmost wish is given—
 And why this dread ? the vital tide recoils
 In hurrying tumult to my labouring heart,
 As if I trod a precipice, and saw
 Destruction from below ! my rivals now
 Are both departed, Abdon to select
 His friends, and Zalmon, in a few short hours
 Will shake these trembling and devoted walls
 With Israel's chosen legions in his train——
 Golden Occasion smiles and points the prize
 Already in my reach, if I but dare
 To stretch my vent'rous hand and seize the boon !
 But should my pleaded passion touch her heart
 And should her plighted faith dissolve away
 Before the fervour of my vows, will heaven
 Sanction the bold attempt ? will heaven permit
 Alliance with a gentile ?—Yes—our God
 Tho' just, is too indulgent to inspire

This fever of the blood, that fires my brain,
 That burns in every nerve, and yet refuse
 The remedy within my grasp ! to pine
 To languish thus, and not to try the means
 Of cure, were low despondence ! but in vain
 I now deliberate—good and evil now
 And right and wrong, upon a moments point
 Revolve in giddy whirl, for Abdon soon
 Will come, and with him comes despair and death.—
 What noise is that ? O lingering fool ! behold !
 Confusion to my hopes ! my rival comes
 Already !

ENTER ABDON AND CANAANITES.

Abd. Can we hope, illustrious friend !
 Your pardon for our stay ? but is thy friend
 Our noble guardian, summon'd hence away ?

Ach. He goes
 To rouse the bands of Israel ; while your fears
 Render resistance vain, a few short hours
 Will see your boasted bulwarks hemm'd around
 By Heaven's own legions !

Abd. Should they force our gates
 Say what ensues ?

Ach. The wasteful rage of fire
 And undistinguished slaughter !

Abd. Can our doom
 Be yet delay'd or shunn'd—my country ! oh !

Ye palaces ! ye heaven-aspiring towers
Ye solemn temples, must ye fall ?

Ach. One way
And only one remains, to save the name
Of Jericho !

Abd. Give it a name—I fly
To try—if yet within th' extremest verge
Of possibility, it lies.

Ach. Their doom
By prompt submission to Jehovah's laws
Given without limit, may preserve your lives
And walls.

Abd. Alas ! the haughty senate still
Oppose the general wish, the giddy throng
Of young patricians overbear the vote
Of the pacific few ; the priests, inspir'd
With all the bitterness of holy zeal
Oppose the popular tide ; even those, who late
Shrunk from your looks with terrour, and repell'd
By you, began to propagate around
Their panics, by the holy Flamen fir'd
Resume their pride, deny their former fears
And put on looks of manhood !

Ach. Does it seem
To them so easy, with the Syren art
Of courtly sycophants, to turn and sway
The multitude, whose fermentation seem'd
Th' immediate act of heaven ?

Abd.

Incens'd by wrongs

They scorn their master's lore, and yet deride
 Their menaces and prayers, the lifted scourge
 And supple knee imploring!—Priestly arts
 And lordly threats alike have lost their power.

Ach.

What, have the masters of the state resolv'd
 Submission or defiance?

Abd.

They prepare

To seize the citadel.

Ach.

What influence

Is yours among the people?

Abd.

Till this crisis

I never made th' experiment.

1 Can.

His power

And influence are great, tho' ne'er till now
 Even by himself suspected, such the force
 Of inborn merit, tho' in humble life!

Ach.

Does the proud senate know his power?

1 Can.

They do,

Or soon at last, shall know.

Achan

Dost thou affect

*to**Abdon.*

Thy country? would'st thou heal her civil wounds,
 And ward the certain and tremendous blow
 That threatens from abroad? Go—point their danger,
 Address the Senate! ask them, if their walls
 Can stand before the power, whose lifted arm
 Sever'd the main sea for his people's march
 And gave their feet to press the unsoft'd sands!

Go tell them how the rolling waves retir'd
 Pushed from their poise by the careering winds !
 Tell how old Ocean woke, and roll'd his robe
 His undulating robe of azure dye
 Round his gigantic limbs in haste, and fled
 To shun the dread invasion. How aghast
 His pale eye from the congregated clouds
 Look'd down upon the moving pomp below,
 Where o'er his pearly bed, thick trampling march'd
 The fugitives of Memphis. In their van
 No ensign wav'd, the pride of Tyrian looms
 With mimic blazonry, but high above
 Streaming long radiance o'er the thick-wove night
 Empyrean glory led them ! Tell how loud
 The billowy pile, that seem'd to quench the stars
 Impending hideous ruin o'er their heads
 Threaten'd with ineffectual roar, withheld
 With strict aerial rein by him who rides
 The winds ! describe, how unresolv'd, aghast
 They stood, till the august * orb mov'd along
 Like the glad progress of the morn !—exalt
 With heaven's own energy thy pompous style
 To match the long majestic colonnade !
 How their pale fronts the watry mirrors smooth'd
 And as the lamp ethereal pass'd, return'd
 With interchangeable, broad glance, from each
 To each, the polish'd helms, the figur'd shields

* Viz. The light that preceded the Israelites.

And horrent spears, thick-twinkling as they pac'd
 In measur'd march along. How Miriam's voice
 Led the respondent choirs, as thus they sung
 Deep charming the nocturnal march, "Ye sons
 " Of Seth! be not afraid!—yon frowning pile
 " Of waves, which longs its brother wave to meet
 " In loud fraternal ruin, threatens death—
 " But not to you!—below yon gloomy arch
 " Securely tread, as if the marble gates
 " Of Memphis, threw their solemn canopy
 " Over your heads, nor tremble when you hear
 " The thunder of Busrrian cavalry
 " Career'ing thro' the deep.—Their way is dark,
 " PRESUMPTION leads them on, and she is blind!
 " Not so your holy guide? hark how they plunge
 " Darkling amidst the hostile brine! and now
 " The noise is heard no more, for ever lost
 " In that tremendous *burst*, and loud salute
 " Of kindred waves, long sever'd; now combin'd
 " That shake the regions round," such was the scene
 My father told, who pass'd the wond'rous vale
 With Israel's squadrons, such were then the deeds
 That scatter'd terror thro' the nations round
 And shook Arabia's hundred thrones, from Nile
 To Jordan! Go! and try its full effect
 On Jericho's proud King and Senate stern.—
 Bid them observe the thunder as it rolls
 Before the bolt descends!—

Abd.

To thee I leave

And heaven, the guard of this beloved roof
 And my soul's treasure, the heaven-ransom'd maid
 For heaven, when thou art present, hems thee round
 With her own legions ! [Exit Abdon.]

ACHAN—SOLOS.

Go—and when those walls

See thee again, may'st thou possess thy love !
 But I'll provide for thy security
 And teach thee such a lesson as shall lay
 Thy stormy passions, all thy hopes and fears
 Thy love and, all thy anxious cares to rest.
 If thou attend'st to the philosophy
 By thy new masters taught ! I go to find
 The unsuspected means, and then, the fair
 (If Zalmon come not with his prouder claim
 To thwart my wishes) will reward my vows—
 If he delay, the grateful King bestows
 The blooming maid ; as my discovery's price—
 Should Zalmon come, and conquer, yet perhaps
 The pious warrior's heart is free ! and then—
 O, transport ! O felicity ! he brings
 The conquering troops of Judah, and for me
 Scales those imperious battlements and gives
 The treasure to my arms ! It must be so—
 I soon will visit this proud fair, and try
 Whether (if Abdon were removed,) my suit

Could touch her breast, for, while he lives, he reigns
 O'er her soft bosom in full sovereignty
 And Zalmon may arrive, the storm of war
 May thunder round our gates; her enginry
 May shake our turrets, ere a moment's given
 To shake her firm resolve!—dead silence reigns
 Thro' every room! the place is all my own—
 First, I'll secure the lover! then I'll try
 If I can fill his room.
 The time is fit to touch a virgin's heart
 When her nice scruples, and her virgin fears
 Are laid to rest, and softer thoughts begin
 To spread their downy plumage o'er the mind.

Exit.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

Scene First—A Street in Jericho.

*Officers leading two Criminals, (with their faces covered) to
 Execution, a crowd following.—A fire seen at a distance.*

1 *Off.* Now try your spells. ye magians of the Nile!
 Try your Egyptian charms! implore your Gods
 To loose your chains! evoke the water nymphs

To waft their liquid treasures on the winds
 From Jordan's sacred flood, to quench yon flames!
 Forbid the rising zephyrs to disperse
 Your ashes thro' the sky, for they will hear
 That voice which wields these elements at will,
 Bid the firm centre yawn, and cast abroad
 Her baleful damp, to quench the rising blaze
 And deaden with cold touch the vital lamp
 In every bosom! ye are dumb, methinks!—
 The thunder of your eloquence is mute!
 The light'ning of your eyes, that sent around
 Pale terror thro' the trembling state, is gone!
 Where are your factions now, that lin'd the streets
 And roar'd defiance to their gracious lords
 Your shouting crowd?—they follow you along
 In abject silence! they who seem'd to doubt
 The power of Vesta, they who scorn'd her laws,
 With vile ingratitude her gifts receiv'd
 Blaspheming the kind donor, learn at last
 The impotence of those fallacious Gods
 Who late (they hop'd) would loose their galling chains
 And sweep away the majesty of state
 Down the swollen tide of anarchy!

Can.

Great Vesta!

Are these the Hebrew spies? are these the men
 From whose terrific eye the warrior fled
 Amaz'd, and scatter'd thro' th' assembled state

Their panic fears?—And is it thus at last
The God of Israel vindicates his slaves?

- 1 *Offi.* Learn thou obedience to thy country Gods;
Nor, tho' they seem to slumber, think their wrongs
Forgot! for thee, for all th' offending crew
Who lately seem'd to waver in their faith
They only claim these victims, tho' no less
Than them ye have deserv'd the penal fire!
Go home! be thankful, and adore the power
Who spares the guilty crowd, and gives them space
For penitence,—lead on!—the rising flame
Rebukes our stay! Amasa! let thy care
Disperse the crowd.

[Exit with the Captives and Guards.]

- 2 *Offi.* Ye who expect to see
Their God descend to quench the flaming pile
And snatch his servants in a humid cloud
Away,—attend the spectacle! your presence
Will shew your want of faith in Vesta's power
And by your doubts, the seniors of the state
Will judge your loyalty, but ye, whose minds
Submissive to the Gods, repose your faith
On what ye have already seen, the bonds
And sentence of those formidable men
Disperse, and bless the Gods at home.

[Exit Canaanites—one remains with the Officer.]

- 2 *Can.* By thee
Amasa! let me not be rashly deem'd

Too idly curious, if I long to know
 How the strange revolution found effect
 So soon? what unknown energy has turn'd
 The popular tide from clamorous mutiny
 To speechless fear? In social confidence
 We still have liv'd! thy secret thoughts to me
 And mine to thee, were manifest as light,
 Since the first sacred flame of friendship glow'd
 In our congenial minds, in early youth:
 I know, and I approve the seniors arts
 To keep the vulgar herd in tramels due
 Of reverential awe to them. To this
 Perhaps the seeming miracle we owe
 For I have watch'd the doors of Adriel still
 Since the Patricians fled; the doors are clos'd
 And all is silent, those Egyptian youths
 Could not without the witness of those eyes
 Have 'scap'd, nor do they wish to 'scape!

2 *Off.*

Art thou

An infidel to Vesta's boundless power?
 Could not her potent breath condense the air
 Or check the visual ray, and wrap the forms
 Of these bold Israelites in tenfold night?
 Could she not send from her creative womb
 Th' illusive image of applauding crowds
 Shouting revolt, and anarchy, to lead
 Those Hebrews, in the simulated pomp
 Of triumph to the snare, till in the grasp

Of sovereign power, they found their feelings pay
The forfeit of their cheated sight?—

2 *Can.*

To me

(Who know the arts of Priests) dost thou harangue
On demon-fraud, and spectres, sent to lead
The wildred wretch astray? come, come my friend!
This will not pass with me; the crowd, you know
Is fled, now all is safe, and silent round—
Unfold your stratagem, nor doubt my prudence
I owe the state too much to blast her views
By letting this important secret 'scape!

2 *Off.* I know thee and can trust thee: these who pass

And who, by this, have felt the penal fire
Are not of Hebrew race!

Can.

Must then the pile

Of this important state, by guiltless blood
Be thus cemented, while the guilty spies
Escape?

2 *Off.*

They were not guiltless, tho' their guilt

Was venial; they were Idumean slaves
The captives of the war. Necessity
Of state oft opes the door to wider wrongs,
The measure had its full effect; you find
How soon it chac'd the giddy crowd away:
Nought else could have assur'd their loyalty
One hour!

Can.

And what becomes of Abdon now

The factious demagogue? the Partizan

Of Israel? he who lately seem'd to look
 Contemptuous down on Senates and on Kings
 From his gigantic pitch of factious power,
 Like him who rides the winds, and bids them range
 O'er land and sea, at pleasure? does he feel
 His cloudy throne sink from him?

2 *Off.*

Yet he knows not

His loss, but (like a man, whose limbs are lopt
 In battle, in the fond illusive dream
 Still seems to stretch the mutilated arm
 And lanch in air the visionary spear
 Or bend the shadowy bow,) so he elate
 With democratic pride, harangues the lords
 In all the extacy of holy zeal
 Nor knows what victims in the rising flames
 Mock the fine music of his labour'd style
 With dying groans! But let us haste and learn
 With what respect the masters of the state
 Receive his insolent message. [*Exeunt.*

Scene—The Senate House.

KING OF JERICHO, AND SENATORS SEATED.

ELIEL PRIEST OF VESTA—ABDON.

Eliel to Your message is deliver'd! wait our will

Abdon. Abroad! but leave not these precincts, for still

Thy talents may be useful to compose
 The madding crowd, if faction still presumes
 To vent her profanations to the stars
 And vex the sacred calm, with wild misrule ;
 You know your duty, guards ! [Exit Abdon.]

What think ye, fathers

Of this bold demagogue, whose liberal tongue
 Arraigns our counsels, bids us loose the chain
 (Which fetters servile rage, which on the brow
 Of sullen Rancour throws a transient calm)
 And leave at liberty the lawless crowd
 To act as Fancy guides ? does he deserve
 A due reward, or not ?

1 Sen. Sedition seems

To sleep at present, or if yet awake
 It dares not own its name, or seems at least
 Calmly to wait his answer !

2 Sen. Let him perish ! —

Scatter his blood among the trembling crowd
 The shower will lay the tempest, and assuage
 Their pamper'd fury ! they have neither head
 Nor heart, if he be gone !

King. Another time

Will serve for that, but, fathers, what avails
 Our care at home, while with collected rage
 Fermenting long, while twice four hundred moons
 Have chang'd the face of night, with all the charms
 Of Nile, deep freighted, and the plagues that haunt

The burning waste of Araby, the foe
 Subdues the mind within, and hangs his spells
 Over our trembling heads ! must we renounce
 The boons of Nature ? drink the running stream
 And live on pulse ? with frozen apathy
 Turn from the glance of beauty, and resign
 The thrilling transport, if it costs a groan
 Or transient pang, to husbands, brothers, fires ?—
 Must we do this, because a figur'd stone
 Deep mark'd with dread and sanguinary laws
 (Beyond the power of mortal to observe)
 Dropt from a cloud at Sinai ? Shall desire
 Die in our bosoms, like the withering flower
 'Cause some unfeeling demon has proclaim'd
Thou shalt not covet ? If the vagrants liv'd
 (As they pretend) like grasshoppers, on dew *
 Is that a reason *we* should spare the flocks
 And lusty droves, that roam a thousand hills
 Or share them with our slaves ?

2 *Sen.*

We must preserve

The joys for which we live, or life itself
 Is scarcely worth the purchase !—Nature made us
 For nobler purpose than to sit and pine
 For joys beyond our reach, and feast our souls
 On Virtue's visionary bliss, on joys
 Beyond the tomb ! the heartless multitude
 ('Tis true,) are taught a lesson which befits

* Viz. The Manna.

Their station, and their views ! to them their priests
Must dwell on themes of duty and of right
And bind their souls in shadowy chains at will,
Unbroken till of late. But now some foe
To our repose has sow'd sedition's seed
Among us ; even the crowd pretend to see
And feel.

4 Sen. These tumults are almost compos'd
Thanks to the terrors of the penal flame !
Their habits of allegiance soon will reach
Their old predominance !

1 Sen. Would we could soothe
Those angry powers, that seem to rule the winds
And waves !

Eliel. And let them rule the winds and waves !
What ! must we dash the overflowing bowl
Of blessing from our lips, because some fiends
Ride the rude winds in wanton merriment
To shake the coral groves below the deep,
And bids the huge and cumbrous wave recede
Before the wild aerial cavalry ?——
What if the blue stol'd nymphs of Jordan's flood
By the seductive demon of the air
With Zephyrean pipe allur'd, command
Their fickle urns at will to ebb and flow ?
'Tis all Egyptian charms, collusive spells !
Between the demons of the elements
And Moses, their great archimage, contriv'd !

Or his successor ! would they cause our dread,
 Let them unhinge the world, misplace the poles.
 Bid them unroot old Lebanon, and hurl
 The hills, with all their load, thro' endless space
 Crumble the centre, and dissolve the globe
 To its original atoms ! can their spells
 Do this ?

Let them produce a sample of their art
 And shake old Vesta's time-establish'd throne !
 Till then our faith will stand secure and firm
 As Tabor or as Carmel, while the breast
 Of our great * mother can support the weight !

King. Speak your opinion, fathers ! is your vote
 Defiance, or submission ? will ye die
 Free as ye liv'd, or bend the servile neck
 To Pharoah's bondmen ?

Senators. We submit ? we cringe
 To Pharoah's bondmen ! we detest the thought !
 Let them dispatch their embassy ! display
 Their false credentials ! we despise them both
 While those proud rapiers stand !

ENTER A MESSENGER, WHO WHISPERS ELIEL.

Eliel. Be Abdon call'd.

King. What message brings your envoy ?

Eliel. All's compos'd——

Let us to Vesta's Fane, and there return
 Thanks for the great deliverance !

King. Lead the way ! [*Ex. Omn.*]

* Viz. Vesta, or the Earth.

A C T IV.

Scene—An Hall in the House of Adriel.

ENTER ACHAN.

Repuls'd! contemn'd! and by a Gentile maid!
 And with such dignity of look and mein
 As ill befits her humble birth! Oh Fate!
 Oh! thou fallacious Power!—whate'er thy name
 Who seem'd with ready hand to smoothe my way
 'To transport! thou who led'st my rival hence
 And left an open field to Love and me —
 Whence these new obstacles? manhood, and pride
 And love will tell, they're meant to stimulate
 And they *shall* stimulate!—for oh! her charms
 In our last interview, her sparkling eyes
 In all their pride of scorn, have waken'd here
 A conflagration!—Love and Vengeance calls
 And both shall soon be satisfied! 'The rage
 Of Faction slumbers in the streets at last—
 Even panic finds a pause, the guests and slaves
 Who left the house to mingle with the crowd
 Impell'd by curiosity or dread
 Will soon return, this moment then is mine!

[*Going*]

ENTER ZALMON.

Achan Baffled again! perdition to my hopes!

Afide. What fiend, who loves to riot on my pangs
Has sent him here again?—

To him. Ha! Zalmon! why

This quick return?

Zal. The gates are all beset,

The rampires mann'd, let that apology

Suffice for me! But—or my guess is wrong

Or, if no vision of the night deceiv'd

My sight, I saw you on the point to pass

The bounds of right, and violate the hour

Of virgin privacy, now, what pretext

What artful gloss can palliate this attempt?

Ach. And who gives *thee* the privilege to sit

In judgment on my deeds?

Zal. Thou own'st it then!

That was not needed, for thy looks declare

Too plain, the purpose of thy heart,—and thou

A delegate from Israel, chosen by lot

Mark'd and distinguished by the hand of Heaven!

Among those unbelievers, to display

A specimen of sanctity, of truth

And all the dignity of self-command,

To gain their veneration for the laws

Of them, whom Heaven for their forefathers worth

So highly favours!—Thou, at such a time

On such a business sent, to loose the rein
 From the wild passions, to profane the flame
 Of plighted love, and burst the sacred bar
 Of hospitality, and social faith !——
 Repent, my friend ! and bless that providence
 That cross'd th' unrighteous purpose !

Ach. I deny

The charge !

Zal. O trifle not with him, whose eye
 Pervades the soul ! nor aggravate thy guilt
 By bold presumption !

Ach. Who commissioned THEE
 (If limits are so sacred) to assume
 The Levites office ? Go ! proud moralist !
 Go to the camp of Israel, and proclaim
 My guilt ! But other cares possess thy soul—
 —That public love which lately flam'd so high
 Has spent its fury, and a gentler spark
 Of lambent radiance takes its turn to reign !—
This bids you shun the wide nocturnal range
 Thro' perils and thro' foes, to Joshua's camp,
 And rather linger round these favourite walks
 For some blest opportunity to soothe
 The fair one's fears !

Zal. 'Tis well—retort the charge
 And spend the precious moments (while we stand
 Perhaps, on the tremendous verge of fate)
 In fierce recrimination ! but *thy mind*

Acquits me, or if not, when Zalmon's soul
 Is better known, perhaps, it may deserve
 Thy approbation,—no sinister views
 But strong necessity forbade my flight
 And sent me here—to save thee from thy *self*
 At present thy *worst* foe.—Reflect on this !
 And learn to know thy friend !

Ach.

Thy words I fear
 Are too prophetic !—Pardon my rash tongue
 And thoughtless folly !—we already stand
 Upon the verge of fate—for hark—the crowd
 Returns, as from the gale that hither wafts
 Their mingled voices, we may learn !

ENTER RAHAB, IN GREAT DISORDER.

Rah. Oh my protectors ! oh my gallant friends
 Would Heaven ! the life which you so lately sav'd
 Could ransom yours ! I fear you are beset
 And nought your valour will avail if true
 The tidings I have heard—and Abdon too
 Is absent, who perhaps, could sway his friends
 To save you.

Achan

Thank my plots ! by them a friend

Afide.

Is lost, who now might shield us !

Zal.

Say, fair maid,

Whence thy intelligence ?

Rab.

'Tis needless now

To tell !—but ere these now forsaken walls

Admit their wonted guests, if ye obey
 My counsel, and to me intrust your safety,
 (Which, as the precious jewel of my soul!
 I'll guard, to my best power) I yet may pay
 Some part of that vast debt of gratitude
 Which, while remembrance lives, I still must owe.

Zal. Our lives are in the hand of Heaven! to that
 We trust! But, it were madness to reject
 Thy counsel, beauteous maid! for Heaven perhaps
 May to thy pure and guiltless mind, suggest
 The means of safety, which, with gratitude
 To thee, and to that power, who rais'd our hands
 To guard thee, and inspir'd thy spotless mind
 With magnanimity to pay the debt
 We gladly chuse, and in thy faith confide.—
 Yet still, in one essential point, thy will
 Must yield to ours—we must not leave these walls—
 Heaven's hand can find and guards us here—even here.—
 Where we experienc'd late its signal aid—
 But to forsake thee here—to leave thy life
 Thy precious life, perhaps a pledge for ours—
 To fly ignobly, and to gain the camp
 Whilst thou, surrounded by thy foes and ours
 Art doom'd to pay the forfeit,—this would blot
 Our names with endless infamy, the name
 Of Israel too must suffer, even the cause
 Of God, the cause of virtue, public love
 (For which we bear the delegated sword)

Would catch the foul contagion, and become
An object of abhorrence, meant by Heaven
For ends far different.

Achan Then my fears are true
Afide. (Were this a time for lesser fears) his heart
Is touch'd, as well as mine!

Rab. This is no time
For nice punctilio—did I mean to thwart
Your generous purpose, you must wait an hour
Yet more propitious to your flight,, and deign
To take th' asylum, which those walls afford
Till Heaven permits escape. There is a place
As secret as the grave, which even the eye
Of Malice and Revenge's eagle glance
Might scrutinize in vain.

Zal. But generous maid!
This must be stipulated first—we live
Conceal'd, whilst thou art safe—when danger threatens,
Give thou the signal, and we fly to save thee
Not on ourselves presuming, but inspir'd
By confidence in him, who nerves the hands
Of infants, at his pleasure, to subdue
The warrior, clad in steel!

Rab. What Heaven suggests
I'll do!—but you with resignation wait
The great event, and let no sudden start
Of thoughtless courage—no suggested fear
For me, entice you to forsake your post

Till first you hear the signal ; all your hopes
 The very crisis of your fate depends
 Upon your silence ! let not even your breath
 Be heard, if possible.

Zal. Whence has this maid
 Such more than manly piety, such faith
 And fortitude ? O virgin ! in thy voice
 I hear and I obey the call of Heaven !
 But whence this dignity of mind ? this sense
 Of heavenly interference far beyond
 Their faith, who live within the glorious dawn
 Of Heaven's illumination ?

Rab. Stay not now
 To question, for the time forbids delay.

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene Continues.

ENTER ELIEZER.

Where are those guests, whose presence has expell'd
 Peace, harmony, and mutual confidence
 From those devoted towers, and in their stead
 Sent loud revolt to bellow round our streets
 And gave that treason, which had lurk'd in thought
 A body and a voice, embrued the hands

Of fiery zealots in my best friends blood ?
 Oh they are gone ! they chose the season well,
 To 'scape the snare, and leave a nobler life
 To fate the fell Patricians rage ! they might
 Have spar'd my friend ; the wretched pair who fed
 The penal flames with blood, has laid the gust
 Of popular frenzy and revolt ! O night
 Foul nurse of anarchy and dark misdeeds !
 Sedition, treason, mutiny and blood
 Like hideous phantoms on thy moonless march
 Attend, and yet thou hast not reach'd the point
 Of thy disastrous noon ! what monstrous births
 What prodigies must yet amaze the stars
 Before the purple messenger of mora
 Arrest thee in thy course ? does Rahab sleep ?
 Can Rahab rest, while fate with rigorous hand
 Perhaps already stops her source of life ?
 Her lover too, her plighted spouse, my friend
 My Abdon lost !

ENTER RAHAB.

Rab. What mean your dreadful words ?

My Abdon lost ! Oh Eliezer ! say

I have mistook your meaning ?

Eliez.

Would to Heaven

You had !—It is a night of dire mistakes

And this had been a blest one ! I could wish

That thou would'st guess my errand, without words.

Rab. What of my Abdon?

Eliex. Perish he, who first

To his too dauntless mind suggested late
That luckless embassy; some * demon told
The jealous Peers, that he was join'd in league
With those audacious strangers, deem'd the spies
Of Israel, whose bold rescue in the face
Of open outrage, fill'd our streets with dread
And turn'd this tide of mutiny against
Our haughty rulers, *they*, as fame reports
At first were struck with fear, when Abdon's zeal
Display'd their danger in such dreadful forms
As made the boldest quake; but soon 'tis said
On a dark message to Eliel sent
The gallant youth was seiz'd, and waits in chains
His sentence!

Rab. Oh unhappy youth! what crime
What charge can Malice or Revenge invent
Against him?

Eliex. Well his innocence is known
Even to his bitterest foes, but other captives
Groan in the self-same danger!

Rob. Who are they?
Concerns it me to know? can there be grief
Beyond what I have suffered?

Eliex. I were cruel
To aggravate your woes! but on the verge

* Achan,—See Act Second, Scene Last.

Of fate your safety stands, and it depends
On you perhaps, to turn the dubious scale—
Reflect on that, let that support your mind
Under a second blow!

Rab. I stand prepar'd—
Whate'er the dreadful certainty, suspense
Is worse.

Eliæ. Thy reverend father too is join'd
In equal doom!

Rab. And why do I remain
Exempt from bonds, when all I held most dear
Are in the grasp of fate!——

Eliæ. Thy hands, perhaps
Are by the bounteous gods at freedom left
To loose their chains, else I had never come
Th' unwelcome messenger of ill to thee—
Those strangers, who are deem'd the lurking spies
Of Joshua, yet perhaps, within the walls
Remain—for all retreat is closely barr'd,
'Tis true, they have protected thee from worse
Than death, and thou might'st seem by every tie
Of gratitude and friendship bound to aid
Their flight, but Piety's superior laws
Thy country's claims; thy faith to Abdon vow'd
Silence the claims of pity! at this hour
The scrutiny begins, and in those bounds
They cannot rest secure; but let thy zeal
Prevent the search! explore their secret haunts!

(If yet these walls contain them) and resign
 Thy captives to the king, thy promptitude
 And filial piety may calm their rage,
 Prevent undue suspicions, which prevail
 Of thy apostacy from Canaan's Gods,
 And gain the captives freedom, else their lives
 Perhaps may pay the forfeit ! I decline
 The sight of strangers—mark my last advice
 And use the precious moments as becomes
 The daughter and the spouse ! I must begone !
 For some are entering whom I must not see !

Rab. O let thy presence aid me !

Eliez.

While I'm free

I can assist you still ! I might be deem'd
 Abdon's accomplice, as I'm known his friend
 If I should be observ'd, adieu, adieu ! *Exit.*

Rab. O dreadful turn of fate ! O test severe
 Of filial duty ! what shall I resolve
 At this tremendous moment ? but no time
 Is left me to resolve !—perhaps the flame
 The penal flame, so lately fed with gore
 Waits for another victim ! Righteous Heaven
 Why this sad interruption ? but 'tis sent
 Perhaps in mercy ! for it saves my mind
 From instant desperation ! *[Goes apart.]*

ENTER GUESTS, CANAANITES, SLAVES OF ADRIEL, &c.

1 Guest. A dreadful inquisition is begun,
 Even now, (it seems ;) by order of the state

For other spies, suspected from the camp
Of Israel, and perhaps, those walls may feel
The scrutiny !

2 *Guest.* The search is now afoot !

1 *Can.* Thou tell'st the fact, as if it nought concern'd
The inmates of this house ; but thou, and I,
And all, have cause to tremble at the tale.

2 *Guest.* Are we concern'd ? are we of Israel's stock
Or Canaan's ? does the mark of treason glow
Upon this front ? if strangers suffer here
Rude violation, then adieu to all
Your commerce and your hospitable fame
From Nile to Ganges spread !

1 *Can.* Hear and reflect !

The danger is but transient, yet the wise
Seek the next shelter even when summer brews
The short-liv'd hurricane ; a few dark hours
Are past, since here those fugitives or spies
(Whate'er they were,) reign'd paramount, and chac'd
The proud patricians, (sons of violence)
In terror from their meditated prey—
Hither, be sure, this dreadful scrutiny
Led by the Flamens, and vindictive Peers
Will soon arrive, and who will stand the brunt
Of this dire inquest ? say will you, or you
Natives or strangers ? nought will then avail
The protestations of our innocence,
And zeal for Canaan's Gods ! we will be deem'd

Part of the factious crowd, the partizans
 Of Israel and abettors of the flight
 Of those suspected spies.—If none are found—
 What tortures then will be our doom ; what pangs
 To force confession of our fancied guilt ?—
 Safer for us to tread the rocking soil,
 When minerals boil below, than dare the storm
 Whose gathering gloom already darkens round
 This destin'd spot ! but if my counsel weighs
 With any, let us leave this dangerous ground—
 —Strangers and natives, Canaanites and guests
 All share one general peril !—Adriel's head
 Will pay the bloody forfeit for the spot—
 —A deadly spot, accurst by all the Gods,
 On which his habitation rests ! the search
 Will instantly begin, and can we stand
 Thus lingering ?—are you bent to meet the rage
 Of arbitrary power and priestly zeal ?
 Are you ambitious on yon flaming pile
 To mark again the watches of the night
 With dying shrieks for Moloch ?—will ye stay
 And perish, or escape and shun the doom ?

2 Can. We take your counsel, brother !

1 Can. What say ye

Ye strangers ; will ye share your fate with us—
 Ye will be deem'd associates with the spies
 And may expect a more relentless doom
 If here you stay !

1 *Guest.*

'Twere madness to neglect
Your sage advice, we go,—conduct the way.

Ex. Omnes.

A C T V.

Scene Continues.

RAHAB—ALONE.

And am I left alone to face the storm
Of priestly rancour, and of kingly rage?
Shall I pursue their flight! and leave my guests
To certain death? my guests, whose confidence
In me have kept them here! my guests whose lives
For me, were first expos'd? By generous care
Of me, those gallant strangers have become
Obnoxious to the state! they might have 'scap'd
All observation, and have pass'd the gates
Unnotic'd as the vulgar herd, that crowd
This mansion daily, had they brook'd the sight
Of violation, with unkindling hearts,
And unavenging hands; and they must die,—
And I must be their murderers!—so the fates
And cruel duty bid, yes—I must be
A traitress, or a parricide!—Oh Heavens
How shall I bear the thought! a bleeding father

A mangled lover ; and shall I—shall I
 Endure such weight of horror and preserve
 My intellects !—But let me pause awhile
 And at the stillness of this solemn hour
 When not a friend is near, with mental beam
 To guide my fault'ring feet, let me address
 My fervent sorrows to the fount of light
 To dispossess the darkness of the soul
 And shew me what is best ; to him the day
 And darkness are alike, the mental eye
 Contemplates him, when outward things are hid
 Behind the deep nocturnal veil ! A guide
 Like him, altho' he points a painful path
 Must lead me right —O thou great origin
 Of rectitude and truth, do thou preside
 O'er my deliberations, whilst I weigh
 Duty with duty in th' unbiass'd scale !
 Be still ye stormy passions ! leave my soul
 Blest with that sacred calm, where Reason's light
 And favouring conscience, with unruffled beam
 Enlightens, like twin stars, the tranquil mind !
 While I pursue the solemn scrutiny
 With all my mental powers, as best becomes
 One, early nurtur'd on the sacred lore
 Of truth ! Oh that my old and reverend guide
 Were present now !—but he to all effect
 Is ever present, while his precepts live
 Within this bosom ! Let me then suppose

His exhortation in this strain to run :

- " Those towers are doom'd to ruin, and the state
- " To swift perdition, like the flaming walls
- " Of old Gomorrah ; of this awful truth
- " Thy heart is well convinc'd—the Hebrew spies
- " (By their commander sent to mark how far
- " Destruction's line must range,) amid the storm
- " Of faction, and Patrician rage, enforc'd
- " With priestly vengeance, yet have brav'd the blast
- " And still must brave the malice of their foes
- " (Their foes with hell combin'd) for all their hairs
- " Are numbered !—and would'st thou, defying Heaven
- " Desponding in her aid, to human threats
- " Or all the rancour of the fiends, betray
- " Thy sacred trust ? What tho' thy sire is bound
- " And Abdon ; thy mistaken piety
- " Might fail to free them,—should thy female fears
- " Resign the great deposit, art thou sure
- " Thy resignation would redeem their blood ?
- " And wilt thou, to secure a dubious good
- " Risque an undoubted crime ? suppose it true
- " (As yet 'tis doubtful) that thy friends are held
- " In durance, does it follow they must fall
- " Unrespited and unrepriev'd ? some time
- " At worst will be allow'd, and Israel's host
- " May interpose to save them if the spies
- " Escape to expedite their march.—Already
- " As if secure of conquest, have they told

" The means, to save thy few remaining friends
 " Amid the general ruin, when the sons
 " Of Jacob with commission'd sword and flame
 " Purge the pollutions of the land!—this roof
 " Must then be *their* asylum, as the ark
 " Of Noah, sacred, and secure from harm,
 " When nought but desolation reigns abroad
 " In solitary pomp, with horror crown'd.—
 " Then like that sacred Germ of nations sav'd
 " From the great world of waters, dark and deep,
 " These walls, the refuge of the righteous few
 " Shall be the cradle of the nascent state,
 " From piety deriving manners pure
 " *Their love of God, express'd by love of man.*"
 Shall I the pupil of ignoble Fear
 Renounce this elevated hope? Shall I
 Renounce the glorious privilege, to hear
 My name among the godlike train enroll'd
Restorers of the nations?—shall I plunge
 Myself, and the sad remnant of my friends
 My father, and my lover too, as seems
 Most like, by these prophetic strangers words,
 In general ruin, from my faith's first vows
 Led by a fleeting shade of hope?—perhaps
 (And surely, Heaven suggests the glowing thought
 For it expands my soul) this tryal comes
 Like that to * Israel's parent, when the voice
 Of Heaven demanded his beloved son!

* Abraham.

A victim on his altars, soon his faith
 His piety, his resignation met
 An heavenly meed; and I, inferior far
 May also save a parent and a spouse
 Without the odious taint of perfidy.
 When every human hope expires, that hand
 Which with aerial bridle held the wave
 From its long menac'd fall, can shake those tow'rs
 And whelm their impious fanes upon the heads
 Of their blind worshippers!—But oh! my heart
 Recoils—down, down the lofty fabric falls
 Built by presumptuous hope! my reverend sire
 My Abdon! must I risque your precious lives
 On such precarious venture! Oh! thou Power
 That rul'st the world within, compose my thoughts!
 Teach me the heavenly art to reconcile
 My warring duties! But I hear th' approach
 Of trampling feet: prepare thee O my soul
 For this great tryal! and thou God unknown
 (Whate'er thy name) thou judge of right and wrong
 Whom from my infant years I worshipp'd still
 With purest zeal! Oh deign this gracious sign
 To point my duty, and thy will to show
 Whether thou meanest thy servants should escape
 Or sigh the slow revolving hours away
 In cruel bondage! when the guards arrive,
 With seeming boldness I shall dare the search
 And shew no sign of dread, if they, deceiv'd

By the tranquillity that marks my look,
 Retire, without a scrutiny, O then
 To thy protection, Israel's God! to thee
 Who sav'd young Joseph; and the infant son
 Of Amram from the bloodhounds of the Nile
 I leave the precious pair in charge, assur'd
 That what thou wilt is best—if they persist,
 In their inhuman purpose, and explore
 With curious eye, each dark recess, my heart
 (Tho' with reluctance) to their doom resign'd
 Will deem that thy eternal wisdom means
 By other hands to save the chosen pair
 And then, in calm expectation shall I rest
 Of some new revelation of thy will!—
 But I can never, never, bring my voice
 To form those hateful and perfidious sounds
 Which give my benefactors up to fate—
 And ere my trembling hand has power to point
 Their dark asylum out—may palsies blast
 Its future motion!—now I am resolv'd—
 Ye demons! send your ministers of wrath!
 Assemble all your terrors, try your wiles!
 I feel that heaven-sent energy within
 That baffles all your stratagems, and here
 The contest opens, but th' event is Heav'ns!

Retires.

ENTER GUARDS.

1 Gua. Ha, this is wonderful ! where are the crowds
 Who fill'd those rooms with barb'rous harmony
 Hymning the bounteous mother of the tribes
 Of life and vegetation ? all is dark
 Silent and lonely ! not a voice is heard
 Nor face appears ! either the Hebrew spies
 Have chosen a lucky moment to escape
 Or some new wonder by their God display'd
 In their protection, has expell'd their foes.

2 Gua. We shall not linger long in dark suspense ;
 For here comes one, whose ready diligence
 Would with a fervent scrutiny, assist
 Our search, if they remain ! her hand would help
 To drag them to their doom, for she has cause—
 The safety of a father and a friend
 Depending on their seizure !

ENTER RAHAB.

Rahab ! tell
 Tell as you tender all that's dear ! are yet
 The Hebrew spies within your walls, or gone ?

Rab. Oh may it not affect the precious lives
 For which I will implore the King, the state,
 That they are now beyond your reach and mine !

By the tranquillity that marks my look,
 Retire, without a scrutiny, O then
 To thy protection, Israel's God! to thee
 Who sav'd young Joseph; and the infant son
 Of Amram from the bloodhounds of the Nile
 I leave the precious pair in charge, assur'd
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 With curious eye, each dark recess, my heart
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 Ye demons! send your ministers of wrath!
 Assemble all your terrors, try your wiles!
 I feel that heaven-sent energy within
 That baffles all your stratagems, and here
 The contest opens, but th' event is Heav'n's!

Retires.

Ra

ENTER GUARDS.

1 *Gua.* Ha, this is wonderful ! where are the crowds
 Who fill'd those rooms with barb'rous harmony
 Hymning the bounteous mother of the tribes
 Of life and vegetation ? all is dark
 Silent and lonely ! not a voice is heard
 Nor face appears ! either the Hebrew spies
 Have chosen a lucky moment to escape
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 For here comes one, whose ready diligence
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ENTER RAHAB.

Rahab ! tell

Tell as you tender all that's dear ! are yet
 The Hebrew spies within your walls, or gone ?

Rab. Oh may it not affect the precious lives
 For which I will implore the King, the state,
 That they are now beyond your reach and mine !

1 *Gua.* How did they 'scape?

Rab.

Let not the censure fall

On me, if female terrour tied my tongue
From giving the alarm, when even our guests
And slaves (as you behold) are fled!

1 *Gua.*

But tell

Did they, confiding in your fears, depart
In bold defiance of opposing powers
In public, unmolested?

Rab

What I know

My duty bids me tell! I did not see
Their flight, I was not station'd here their guard;
But is it probable, that strangers, guests
That menials, void of manhood, as of worth
Could stand the terrour of their deadly looks
When warriors fled amaz'd! But oh my father
My Abdon! where are they, what dungeon's gloom
Contains them? can you tell, what sentence waits
Their guiltless heads?

2 *Gua.*

Unless the spies are found

(With whom thy friends are held accomplices)
I would not have their fears for all the wealth
From Ganges to the Nile!

1 *Gua.*

Hard of belief

By nature, I am apt to doubt report—
How could they pass our loftiness of wall
Which but the winged vagrants of the sky
Nought can surmount? did that aerial fiend

(Whom as 'tis said, they serve) with some new spells
 Fledge them with pinions to ascend the clouds
 And mock our vengeance, or conduct them down
 A subterranean pass, like eyeless moles?
 The * bounteous mother would not see profan'd
 The awful boundaries of her unfeign'd realms
 By visitors so hated: hence, I deem
 They still are here conceal'd!

Rab. Pursue your search! —
 If aught you find to taint my innocence
 Let me be doom'd with Abdon [*aside*] their design
 Is to enforce discovery, by these threats,—
 Not meant to be accomplished; and kind heaven
 At last will save my friends. —

2 Gua. Her confidence
to the And unembarrass'd air amaze my soul!
first. The spies are 'scap'd—or soon her piety
 Her love of Abdon, and her female fears
 Had mark'd the secret, were they here conceal'd.

1 Gua. Yet were they gone, her fears for Abdon's life
 And for her aged sire, had shown their power
 By stronger symptoms! —

2 Gua. Young dissembler! say
to Rab. What mean you thus to dally with the fate
 Of all that's dear, at such a time as this?

1 Gua. This is no time to trifle; our return
 Ere this is look'd for; wilt thou lead the way

And shew the dark recesses of thy house?—

(They may be here conceal'd unknown to thee)

Let us complete the search?

Rah. It suits not me

A virgin and alone, at this dark hour

To take a part in such a scene, but go—

No bolt nor bar prevents you! every door

Is open, as you see!

3 Gua. An easier call

(If here they lurk) may bring them to our lure,

And save our time and toil?

2 Gua. What dost thou mean?

3 Gua. You know how fierce their Hebrew spirits flam'd

Contemning all disguise, when late the Lords

Meant to have borne this lovely prize away!—

She too is charg'd with treason to the state

And to the Gods: if we should bear her hence

The slightest shew of violence to her

Her struggles and her cries, (if she resist)

Would have th' effect of lightning, and soon rouse

The lions from their dens.

1 Gua. This is no time

For such experiments!

3 Gua. I serve the state,

And scruple not to use whatever means

Can to her service best conduce! [Seizes Rahab.

Rab.

Ye powers

Of Heaven ! look down and succour, since no friend

On earth is left me.

[*Thunder and lightning—the
guards stand aghast,**1 Gua.* Oh Ashtaroth ! what may these terrors mean ?*Rab.* Thanks to th' eternal powers, which, twice this night

Have listn'd to a trembling virgin's prayer.

1 Gua. I knew your violence would wake the wrath*to third* Of some offended God —pursue the search !

Tho' that I fear is vain !—

2 Gua.

Pursue the search !

Bid me to meet the anger of our lords !

They are but men, and bounded in their power

But to defy the lifted bolt of Heaven

To rush on sure destruction, is above

My daring !

4 Gua.

What if now the sulph'rous stores

Of Heaven are opening, and our doom begun,

Like ancient Sodom ?

5 Gua.

Whether here or hence

Those terrible divinities, who sav'd

Their lives, so oft in jeopardy this night,

Protects them still !

Rab.

Oh heavenly truth ! compell'd

aside.

From impious lips ! even the profane confess

The hand of Heaven !

1 Gua.

Then what detains us here

When our destruction, like a whirlwind, soon

May overwhelm us ! let us hence and tell
Our success to the state !

2 *Gua.*

If they should doubt

Our truth, let these undaunted lords who know
The spot, who lately show'd their prowess here,
Let them, who know the *persons* of the spies,
And from a legion, by their guilty looks
Could easily select them—let *them* come,
And try their fate on this distinguish'd field.
I war not with the fates, remain who will !

[*Exit Guards.*

Rab. Author of Nature ! thou hast heard my prayers,
Thy answer came in thunder—but to me
More welcome than the shepherd's pipe at morn !
I pray'd, that if you meant your servants 'scape,
These ruffians, eager in the scent of blood,
Who snuff the coming slaughter like the breeze
From Sharon's vale, should falter in the chase,
Thou spok'st the word, they trembled and they paus'd !—
—So ought not I to pause, the thunder's voice

[*Thunder again.*

Again, and louder, warns me hence to aid
The Hebrews' flight, while terror chains their foes.

[*Exit, and returns with Zalmon and Achan.*

Rab. Your trust in heaven is not in vain, behold
Its terrors march before you, and prepare
Your way ! Deliverance comes in lightning clad,
And arm'd with thunder, where it leads, pursue

With boldness ! I have seen the guards retire
 Aghast, before the winged flame that sweeps
 Yon battlements which overlook the roof
 And every pass command ! the midnight storm
 Has left an awful solitude around.——
 Where on the city walls our rafters lean
 There is a window unobserv'd, but full
 In view, if any watch'd ; thro' this a cord
 Provided by my care, shall bear your weight
 Safe down the dizzy height, till on the ground
 You fix your feet, then speed you to the plain.

Ach. But you are still in danger !

Rah. Let no thought
 Of me, delay your flight—the guards but now
 Were here, intent to search with rigid care
 Where'er suspicion pointed, but the voice
 Of Heaven no sooner thunder'd in their ears,
 Than all aghast they fled. No doubt remains
 But long ere this the panic has begun
 To seize their Lords, and each vindictive thought
 Is swallowed up in fear, they have no time
 At this dread crisis to enquire of me
 Or punish misdemeanours ; on your faith
 And not on them, my future hope depends
 And on your God !—*They* are below my dread.

Zal. And God so deal with us as we preserve
 This house of refuge !—this asylum pure !
 And all, who share your blood, or by the ties

Of nobler friendship join'd, (the ties of soul)
 Claim your protection—Now adieu! may Heaven
 Continue still to guard you, and display
 The merits of thy boundless trust in Him
 Which draws the wonder of applauding saints
 Even thro' this midnight gloom! it soon shall vye
 With the meridian splendours of the sun
 A bright example to the nations round!

[*Ex. Spies,*

ENTER ELIEZER.

Cowards! oh abject cowards! to return
 Without their errand! may their angry lords
 Give them their due reward! The spies, they say,
 Are 'scap'd: How 'scap'd? The walls are mann'd around!
 The gates are barr'd and guarded—Heaven! Earth! Hell!
 Are all the warring elements in league
 With these Egyptians? Must a panic seize
 Our boldest hearts? and oh, my friend! my friend!
 Must *thy* devoted blood our temples stain,
 To welcome these dire visitants? Thou too
 Befriended them! And is it *thus* they pay
 Thy friendship? Is it thus their gods defend
 The favourers of their cause? My reason reels
 In clouds and darkness wandering—toft and whelm'd
 Amid contending thoughts! the hoary fire
 Must perish with the son! Could Rahab save
 Those Hebrews with the ransom of such blood?

Nature revolts at such a thought ! The pard,
 The lion, or the tyger would renounce
 Their nature, and put on humanity
 At such a double claim ! Oh had I join'd
 These heartless messengers, not fire nor sword
 Had hinder'd me to ransack every room,
 And know at least the certainty ! But here
 She comes ! no sign of guilt is in that face !
 No sign of dread ! Alas ! unhappy maid !
 You little know, what raven notes must wound
 Your ear !

Rab. They are escap'd, and all is safe !
 But what again brings Eliezer here
 So soon, and with such signs of deep despair
 Stamp'd on his visage ! Oh, I fear the worst !

Eliez. My mercies must be cruelties ! To find

Aside. Her guilt, or innocence, I must at once
 Divulge the fatal news.

Rab. What hopes, my friend,
 Of Abdon's pardon or escape ?

Eliez. Thy fire
 And Abdon soon will 'scape, and soon defy
 The proud Patricians utmost rage !

Rab. I like
 Thy message, better than thy looks !

Eliez. My looks
 Bely not my intent ! Thy Hebrew spies

Are 'scap'd, however, if their happy flight
Can recompense the loss !

Rab. Of what ! oh speak !

Eliez. I have no heart to tell thee ! thou wilt know
Too soon ! Conceal thee quickly. Vengeance calls
Upon thy name, and brands thee with the stain
Of parricide. I would not have thy blood !
And must not here be found. [Exit.

Rab. And let them come, I will not once attempt
To hide me from their rage ! A parricide !
Adriel ! it cannot be ! and Abdon too,
Fall'n in the cause of Israel, fall'n to save
These spies' devoted heads ! and I to screen
My country's foes ! and let a father's hairs
His few grey hairs, sink to the grave in blood !
Is this the way that heaven rewards its friends
In Israel's cause ! itself the cause of heaven !
No matter ! soon a teacher will arrive
Whose bloody steel will cut the gordian knot
Of those dark topics, and I'll rest in peace.—
Make haste, ye ruffians, seize the parricide !
I would not live had I a thousand worlds
Giv'n me to live beneath the horrid sense
Of such an imputation ! Ought I not
(If I must die) to try if yet my blood
Can save my fire's ? the blow may not be given.
It cannot be ! I go, I fly to save him,
And crown my fall with glory ! But again [Thunder.

The awful noise of heaven is heard—again
 Its lightning darts around—oh no, this blaze
 Of glory comes not from contending clouds !—
 What heavenly visitant is this ! O spare,
 Spare me if I have sinn'd !

ANGEL.

Be not dismay'd !

Thou more than conquerest in the cause of truth !
 Know thine own merit and the just applause
 Thy faith, thy conflicts, and thy strength of mind
 (The glorious harvest from the heavenly seeds
 So early sown) have won ; they are the themes
 Of more than mortal minstrelsie ;

Rab.

O thou

The messenger of other worlds, that tellest
 Of things beyond the stars ! hast thou beheld
 The secrets of the dungeon ? Hast thou heard
 A father's murder, calling for revenge
 Against an impious daughter ?

Angel.

Check thy tears,

And tell thy anxious heart thy father lives !
 He lives in bonds, but soon a viewless hand
 Shall shake his prison walls without a blast
 To ruin, and the reverend captive free.—
 Thy Abdon martyr'd in the glorious cause
 Has seal'd his testimony with his blood.
 This was conceal'd from thee ! Thy love, perhaps,
 Had led thee to have shar'd his fate, thy zeal

Could not have sav'd him, tho' it sunk thyself
 In ruin ! But be comforted, *he* lives
 Who can supply his loss—an Hebrew chief,
 Matchless in worth, and terrible in war,
 Soon shall awake the deep-mouth'd storm that lays
 These rampires low ! his kind protecting hand
 Shall guard thee thro' the hurricane, and raise
 Thy humble fortunes from their lowly state
 To match with kings, a NAME above all kings
 Shall grace thy lineage and extend his sway
 O'er nations yet unborn, and climes unknown.

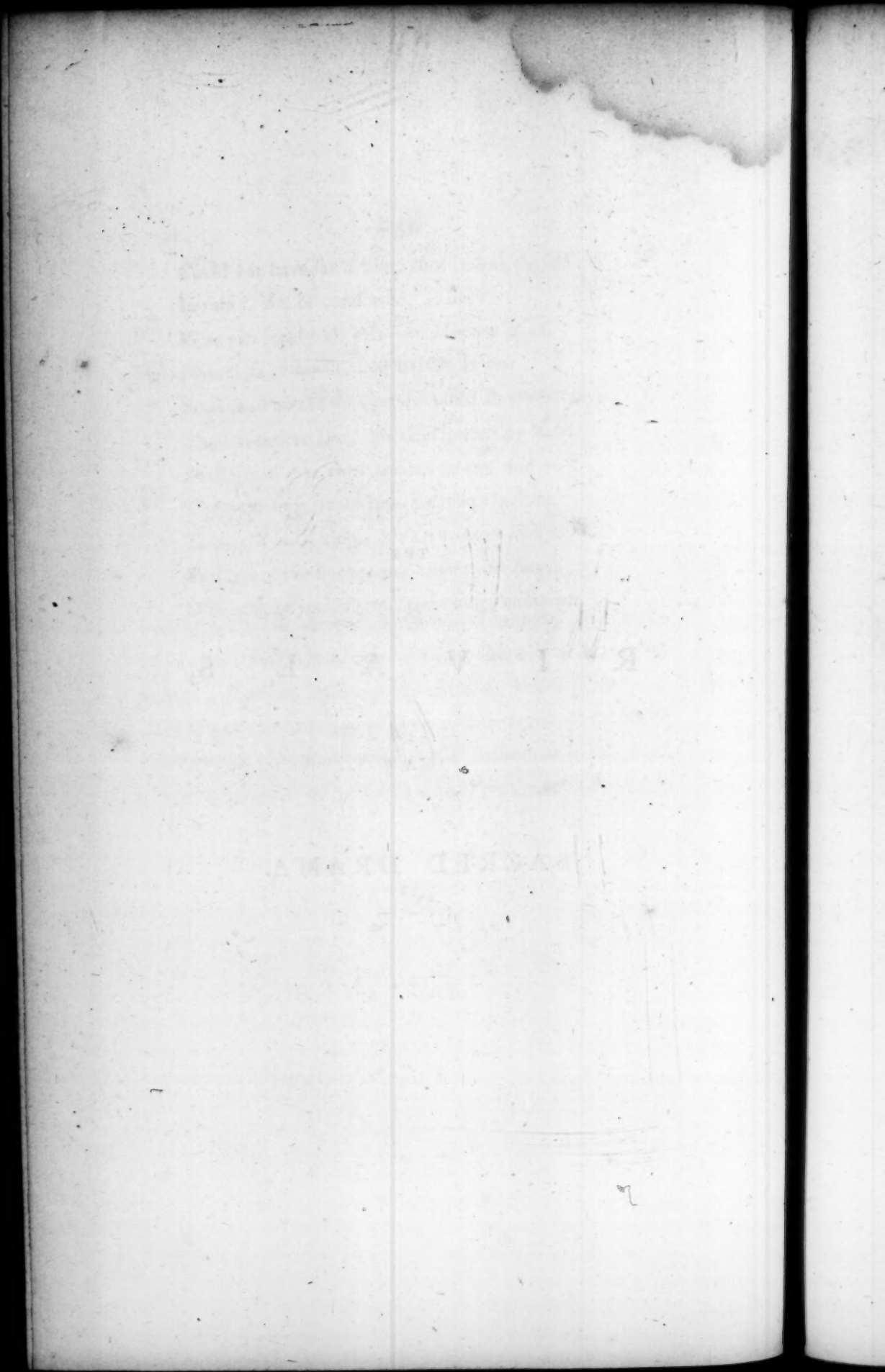
FINIS.

THE

R I V A L S,

A

SACRED DRAMA.



ARGUMENT.

ACHAN, instigated by jealousy of Zalmon, and the suggestions of Phanuel, a Zidonian proselyte, and, at the same time, doubtful of his own merit to obtain the object of his passion, employs sinister means to aggrandize himself; and not only to supplant, but to destroy his rival. The incidents produced by this opposition of interest and character, are the subjects of the following poem.

P E R S O N S.

JOSHUA, General of the Israelites.

PHINEAS, the High Priest.

ZABDI, a noble Israelite of the house of Judah.

ZALMON, representative of the eldest branch of Judah.

ACHAN, son to Zabdi.

ABOLIAH, an herald.

PHANUEL, a Zidonian proselyte.

ISRAELITES.

See Joshua, 7th Chap.

THE RIVALS,

SACRED DRAMA.

Scene.—A Camp: the Ruins of Jericho, seen at a distance.

JOSHUA, PHINEAS, ABOLIAH, THE LEADERS OF THE
ISRAELITES—THE ARMY DRAWN UP IN BATTALIA.

Military Music.

Joshua. CEASE your vain minstrelsie ! nor raise the wrath
Of Heaven with sounds profane !—for, if I judge
Aright, all is not harmony within !— [*Music ceases.*]
Can it be so, ye Israelites ! that you,
For whom th' eternal laws that rule the globe
Suffer tremendous change, that you for whom
The waters rose in chrystal pride, yon walls
In all their pomp of loftiest masonry
Sunk to the level of the stagnant pool

That you, in heavenly favour rank'd so high,
 Cloth'd in such dreadful dignity, should dare,
 In proud defiance of Heaven's late commands,
 To long for tinsel toys, for glittering gems
 That shed below a pale fantastic day
 Thro' subterranean worlds, in dubious gleam?
 You that were born to gaze on yonder sun
 And lift your glory to the wondering stars!
 Degenerate warriors, can you thus forget
 Already the Almighty hand which laid
 Yon rampires low! if ye provoke him far
 Your secret prayers may draw his vengeance down
 By granting what you wish, the yawning earth
 May send you down, with living eyes, to see
 The sunless scenes, where Mammon sits in gold
 Amidst his mineral glories high enthron'd
 In the mock splendours of malignant light,—
 Dread this, ye rebels!—Are the cohorts gone
 To summon *Ai's* proud sons?

Abol.

They are, my Lord!

Jos.

We dread the consequence, unless your tears
 And penitence appease the Power incens'd
 Who led us here! Yet still he condescends
 By me to warn you, nay, more humble still,
 He means to your own reason to submit
 The motives of your mission, and his wrath,
 Against the nations round! He chuses not
 By regal interdict your hands to bind,

Nor deign to tell you why. He now repeats
 By me his motives, tho' vouchsaf'd before,
 To bend your stubborn minds (if aught can bend)
 Or leave you nought to plead. 'Twas not for spoils,
 'Twas not to fight amid the raging flames
 For molten ore. 'Twas not to strip the dead,
 And load our groaning waggons with the stores
 Of sacrilege—from Baalim's shrines to rend
 The offering of pollution, silver, gold,
 And gems, (by vice and idol rites profan'd)
 For which from trembling Nile, the hand of Heaven
 Led us thro' high suspended seas, that flank'd
 Our passing files with horrors all their own!—
 'Twas not for this the sovereign voice of heaven
 Summon'd the sounding waters from our way—
 Upon th' eternal turbulence of floods
 Imposing solemn pause. 'Twas not for this
 Yon well-compacted masonry, that slept
 For many a slow-revolving moon unmov'd,
 In rigorous repose, at the dread sound
 Of Aaron's hallowed trumps forget to sleep,
 And left their limy beds in dreadful dance
 Like Nature's last convulsion! Had the will
 Of Heaven design'd to give us splendid seats;
 In filken luxury to lap our limbs,
 To bid us court the gales in groves of palm,
 Or citron shades beside meand'ring rills,
 To form our beds of down, to bind our brows

With gemmy lustre, and to load our board
 With all the luxuries of sea and air,
 With all that haunt the streamlet and the grove :
 For this, he might have led us to the springs
 Of Nile, or sent us west to fix our seats
 On Tingitana's fair Atlantic shore,
 Where still th' indefatigable soil
 Teems with her annual bounty, unimpair'd,
 Her plains with harvests deep, her jocund hill
 With viny chaplets crown'd, and olives gay.
 —But it was not for this that Israel's god
 Selected us among the numerous tribes
 That roam the face of earth ; his favouring care,
 Not always by such blessings is dispens'd—
 They often snare the soul ! It was to keep
 His sacred law inviolate, and pure,
 Which figures scenes more splendid yet to come.
 —It was, by our high-fortun'd state to shew
 The nations round what glories crown the heads
 Of the obedient, we his instruments
 Of equitable wrath and vengeance just
 Were sent to scourge his foes, to seize the soil
 Which thro' their crimes, (if they persist in crimes)
 They forfeit to their founder : should we seize
 The glittering spoils selected from the war
 The price of blood and tears, oblations meet
 For these fell spirits, whose polluted fanes
 Their treasures deck'd (fit bribes to conjure down

Their demon favours on the future deeds
 Of violence and outrage) should the tribes
 Of God, with such vile dross profane their hands.
 Soon the contamination from the palm
 Would reach the deep-infected mind, and taint
 The chosen people with the sin that drew
 Perdition on our foes. Then obloquy
 Would hunt along our execrated names
 From age to age, with this well-earn'd reproach
 " These are the hypocrites, that scourg'd the world,
 " Pretending Heaven's commission, to destroy
 " His foes, and thro' the nations to dispense
 " Heaven's vengeance at their will : but lust of gold
 " Not love of right, nor piety impell'd
 " Their furious expedition, else their care
 " Had shunn'd the taint of crimes which they themselves
 " Were sent to punish, not to patronize.
 " Thus Heaven is partial, or they too had felt
 " For their foul deeds, her vengeance in their turn,
 " Or all is by the hand of Chance dispens'd !"—
 Thus were Heavens' name blasphem'd, her holy law
 Brought into foul reproach by us, whom Heaven
 Had like a flaming beacon on a hill,
 Sent, as a warning to the nations round
 Of kindling wrath !——
 Beware then—lest your waning light be lost
 In dim eclipse, and Stygian fogs obscure
 Your luminary, till it sets in night,

With gemmy lustre, and to load our board
 With all the luxuries of sea and air,
 With all that haunt the streamlet and the grove :
 For this, he might have led us to the springs
 Of Nile, or sent us west to fix our seats
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 Brought into foul reproach by us, whom Heaven
 Had like a flaming beacon on a hill,
 Sent, as a warning to the nations round
 Of kindling wrath !——
 Beware then—lest your waning light be lost
 In dim eclipse, and Stygian fogs obscure
 Your luminary, till it sets in night,

Primæval night, and Heaven's impartial hand,
 Select another lamp to shed around
 The mental beam unsullied—would you shun
 This foul reproach and ruin ;—would you wish
 To keep th' unutterable name unblam'd ?—
 Teach your hands continence ! instruct your eyes
 To view the pride of Tyrian looms, the stores
 Of Babylon, of Ormus, and of Ind,
 Without a languishing unfated gaze,
 So shall Jehovah lead your armies forth,
 So shall your heaven-commission'd sabres wear
 An unabated edge, and Canaan's tribes
 Sink at the growing terrors of your name !

Phin. Joshua ! Your dread remonstrance has expell'd
 (If I conjecture right) the lurking pest,
 If any yet remains,—the signs of awe
 And penitence pervade the mighty host !

Josb. 'Tis well ! it were a shame, that Gentile breasts
 Should own a sense of duty, far beyond
 Our feeble feelings ! think on Rahab's worth !
 Think on what bribes *she* scorn'd, her parent's life,
 Her lover's (not to speak of meaner things,
 Riches and honours) had she broke the laws
 Of hospitality, and given our spies
 To Canaan's rage !—Her piety to heaven
 Preferr'd the sacred voice of sovereign truth,
 Of pure unbiass'd reason ! Be it thine,
 Aboliah, to take care, that with respect

Worthy her merit, the distinguish'd fair
May be receiv'd !

Abol. Your orders are obey'd.

The gratitude of Achan for a life
Redeem'd by her, has tax'd his diligence
To match the maid's reception to her worth.
—His cohorts form her guard, in all the pomp
Of eastern majesty, as if some queen
From distant Aram, or from Elam's plains,
Had deign'd to visit us !

Josb. Some future time, we will consult the means
Her merit and her suffering to reward.
—Meantime the evening sacrifice awaits
Our presence, let the general host attend !

[*Military Music. Excunt.*

Scene.—*Another part of the Camp.*—*Same prospect.*

PHANUEL, ACHAN.

Phan. Despise his menace ! what concerns it thee,
Who, when the awful interdict was given,
Wast absent ? What was done, thou well may'st plead,
^A Was done before the mandate met your ear !
You were employ'd on an important charge
Apart, the care of Rahab ! that may calm
Your fears, if any terrours yet remain.

Act. My former doubts are nearly all dispell'd,
 Whether celestial vengeance min'd yon towers,
 Or if they fell by chance, seems dubious yet.—
 For grant the first, that unremitting hand
 That checks the torrents roar, and whelms the mound
 Before our dreadful march, benignant, seems
 My secret views to favour : All my hopes
 Seem ripening fast—my eldest rival fell
 In yon proud city's ruin ; at my word
 The snares of death enclos'd him, nor was I
 To blame ! * I only gave his frenzy way,
 And he himself, with voluntary hand
 Drew down perdition, by his country's love
 (Vain meteor) led to fling his life away !——
 But when I weigh my merit with the worth
 Of Rahab ; when I think on Zalmon's love
 I feel despair with chilling hand arrest
 My heart, and blast the spring of all my joys !

Pban. Your humbleness of mind has had its use.
 Even your desponding thoughts have urg'd you on,
 To lay your basis firm and deep, beyond
 The storm of Fortune, or the fapp of Fate.—
 Nor yet indulge these fears ! when they prevail
 They check the active powers ! attend to Hope,
 And hear what she suggests ! Could Heaven dispose
 The chain of things, that since have come to pass,
 More prosperous to thy view ? The priestly hand

* See Temple of Vesta, Act II. Scene Last.

(As if the plunder'd gold had touch'd his palm)
 Has cast the lot on Zalmon, to conduct
 Our chosen legions to the fields of Ai,
 Your second rival leaves the lists to thee.
 The lovely maid is left within thy guard,
 But thou, as if with him thy better mind
 Were fled, in ling'ring doubt mispend'st the hours
 That courts thee to thy hopes ! Address the fair
 With all the fervency of love, assail
 Her yielding heart ; you own she has not yet
 Repell'd your vows, nor shewn the least surmise
 That she suspects thee for her lover's fate.

Act. She does not. But the time is adverse yet,
 To amorous parly, while the recent loss
 Of that lov'd youth, with all the tyranny
 Of grief, usurps her soul : a day will come
 To dry her tears !

Phan. And Zalmon may return.

—Thus to the negligent, or fearful man,
 Fresh obstacles spring up, like noxious weeds
 That choke the sluggard's field !

Act. I dread his worth,
 'Tis true ; and his is not a heart that scorns
 The softer passion ! But my hopes arise
 From this reflection, that his bosom burns
 With fiercer flame for glory, which he calls
 A godlike zeal. In him the mighty minds
 Of all his great progenitors survive,

And oft the splendid prospects * of our tribe
Mount his aspiring soul above the moon.
His is the elder branch, the regal rod
By Jacob promis'd to great Judah's line,
He deems will grace his progeny at last !

Phan. His pride may here deceive him ! To the line
At large the promise is bestow'd, and thou
Claim'st equal right with him, for in thy veins
Flows the pure blood of Phares, as in his.—
In Israel oft the younger has usurp'd
His elder's birthright, by his merits won—
Witness your great progenitor himself,
Who won the blessing, by old Isaac meant
For his degenerate brother.

Ab. This when time
Accords. But, meantime, be it far from me
To thwart his princely pride with any claims
Of mine, ambitious to transmit the line
To after ages pure ! Be mine the task
With recent fuel still to feed his pride ;
On this I'll build, with cautious vigilance.—
To be prepar'd for all emergencies
Becomes th' attentive mind that means to rise.—
Should Zalmon from the fields of Ai return
In triumph ; by success his native pride
Would only flame the higher ; he suspects
Not yet my love for Rahab, and to me

* See the Promises to the Tribe of Judah, Gen. 49.

His kinsman, late his fellow envoy, deigns
Familiar audience; *then* my ready art
Will paint his purpose to debase the blood
With gentile Canaan's, in so foul a shape
As soon must turn his passion to disgust!—

Phan. And will you miss the fair occasion given
To bear her hence beneath the friendly veil
Of night that favours amorous thefts? thy stores
Snatch'd from the ruins of yon smoking walls
Might bribe a legion! from the multitude
Who at our General's interdict repine
Which robs them of their spoils! the soldiers due
Our toil has form'd a small but faithful band—
Those, tir'd to bear the double discipline
Of poverty and war, resolve to win
And wear the glittering spoil: Thy secret hoard
Of wealth, affords enough to cloy the wish
Of Avarice, and leave enough besides
To give you rank, where'er you fix your seat
And dignity, above your utmost hopes—
—Before the full moon wanes, my friends shall bear
The lovely fugitive to Gaza's shore—
—Thy care, I hope, has chosen for her guard
A man to thee devoted!

Ach.

None are there

But what have tasted, or expect to taste
My bounty: for the pruning hook and spade

Their future portion here, they long to share
A less laborious lot.

Phan. Then why delay ?

In Gaza's friendly port, the brigandine
Mann'd by Sidonians, waits her welcome freight.

Acb. The winds are adverse still !

Phan. But on yon heights

That front the rising sun, the vapours tell
That the deep current of the air, which flow'd
Eastward, begins to ebb, and soon will turn
Towards the West, and sweep with founding wing
The sands : for so the balance of the sky
Requires, still changing with alternate sway.

Acb. Our voyage thence to Sidon by the shores
Is long and dangerous !

Phan. But on Sidon's shore

A splendid settlement awaits the man
Who carries riches thither, they are poor
But like the frugal bee, that ceaseless roves
From flower to flower, industrious. So they roam
From isle to isle, thro' all the sea-girt bounds
Of Javan, with an ever-changing freight
Where'er necessity impells their sails.—
—Thy riches there would raise thee to a height
Above the poor and liminary Kings
Whose little realms in those umbrageous vales
Are lost, or on the cliff-crown'd hills afar
Their frontier castles meet with hostile frown

And pareel out the rock : But *there*, the power
 That rules the main, shall see thy vessels plow
 Her foamy bosom to the distant shores
 Of Gades and Atlantis, thee the winds
 Shall all obey, and smoothe their ruffian plumes
 To bring thy precious bales to Sidon's coast.
 Thy hostile keels, on this devoted land
 May pour thy well paid legions, and subdue
 Their rude militia, at thy splendid files
 Amaz'd : thy scythed cars may sweep their plains
 Thy skilful mercenaries from the bounds
 * Of Chettim brought, (for deeds of arms renown'd)
 Will teach to force the gate, the mound to scale
 To point the column, and with wheel reverse.
 To flank the Hebrew's trembling host, and pour
 Confusion on the rear,—was not the rod
 Of royalty to Judah's line decreed ?
 And art thou not of Judah's line ? perhaps
 Thy victor files, from Sidon's border led
 May give the promis'd crown, and Lebanon
 From his imperial brow beholds his groves
 His tributary groves, already wait
 Thy destin'd steel his glory to extend
 And bid his stately timbers plow their way
 Thro yon proud surge, to visit other worlds
 Beyond the seeming boundless deep, and then
 Say, wilt thou linger here, and trust your hopes

* This exaggeration is meant to impose upon Achan's credulity

To Passions veering gale, to the poor chance
 That Zalmon's lordly mind may scorn the maid
 Of alien and of humble race? away!
 Trust not the fickle balance of the soul
 Dependent on a breeze! the steady breath
 Of Fortune or of Fate distends thy sail!—
 The fair occasion smiles, like yonder moon!
 But envious clouds may soon eclipse her light
 And envious fiends may cross thy favour'd way
 If thou shouldst falter now!—

Ach. Thy friendly zeal
 Demands my thanks: yet Phanuel! Oh my friend
 Great is the hazard, unappriz'd! unwarn'd,
 To bear her hence, unconscious as I am
 If I possess such interest in her heart
 As may assure my pardon!

Phan. Thou a man
 A soldier, and dismay'd? forget thy fear!
 And tell thy flattering heart, the sex forgive
 All ills their beauties cause!—

Ach. Yet truest love
 Is mixt with awe: But fate commands—I go
 To spring the mine that ruins or exalts
 My hopes for ever. [Exit Achan.]

Phan. Go! believing fool!
 Clear sighted to the specious arts of priests
 And scorning superstition, but involv'd
 In double darkness by thy easy faith

In man—thou knowest not yet, but soon shalt learn
 When the deep surge o'erwhelms thee, that thou art
 No more but Phaniel's tool—but go and bear
 Thy treasures and thy future bride on board!—
 —What means this phantom? or I dream, or night
 Deceives me with her soul-appalling shapes
 Or he again is here, and Zalmon too
 Mysterious Fate!—or Chance!—or are there Gods
 That thwart our purpose? But be calm! my soul!—

PHANUEL, ZALMON, ACHAN.

Phan. Zalmon return'd so soon? is Ai subdued?

Zal. Go ask the dead, which lie around her gates!
 The flower of Israel fallen! I met my friend
 And brought him back, for he and thou art call'd
 This instant to the General's tent to see
 A second levy by the sacred lots!

Phan. Then be it so!—and have the sacred lots
 Decided thus already?—But—for thee
 They managed well—thy 'scape declares their truth
 Tho' still the hostile troops exulting threat!
 Was it the part of Zalmon to return
 And leave his gallant troops without a head
 Or heart?

'al. How much I scorn to clear my fame
 To thee, my silence soon could shew! but thou
 My friend in danger, who hast seen my deeds
 Shalt know, that here, in the inglorious lap

Of Safety, Zalmon ne'er shall waste his prime
 When glory calls ! I only hither came
 To tell of our disaster and return
 With our new levies, ere to-morrow's dawn.—
 But thou, as thou revearest thy noble race
 Thy safety or thy dignity, avoid
 Evil communication, for it leads
 To misery, shame and ruin !—

Phan. Who art thou

That dar'st prescribe to him ?—art thou the head
 Of all the name ? is he not fit to chase
 His friendships and his enmities ?

Ach. No more!

Zalmon ! lead on, we'll instantly return [*To Phanuel.*

[*Exit Achan and Zalmon.*

Phan. I was too warm !—'twere better I had sooth'd
 This Zalmon's pride of blood, for I have means
 To strike a deadly blow, without a threat—
 —An injury is easier to be borne
 Than broad avow'd contempt, scorn and defiance
 Of us, weak, reptile slaves to do our worst !——
 And this shall Zalmon feel ! and Achan too
 His kinsman, will I make my tool, my drudge
 The missive thunder in this prompt right hand
 To bear my vengeance home, if by his means
 I am detained here. I will not trust
 To the precarious fortunes of the field
 Alone,—proud Lord ! altho' thy pulse beats high

With Judah's richest blood, I'll find the means
To lower its tone a pitch, and on thy cheek
Produce another tint.—But why so soon
Returns my brave compeer?

ENTER ACHAN.

Ach. Death to my hopes!—
This other blow, like lightning's nimble stroke
That withers the strong hand, in act to strike
And mocks the threat'ning of the lifted spear
Has laid our labour'd plans for ever low!

Phan. What can have happen'd since to shake thee thus?

Ach. The lot is cast,—and I that lately stood
Like a fair tree on Tabor's flowing side
With all my boughs full summ'd, and spreading wide
Am left a blasted trunk!

Phan. Be more thyself,—this passion may betray
Thy secret purpose,—in this dreadful eve
Each ear is open, and each ghastly eye
Is on the watch, to scrutinize the Fates
Attendant on to-morrow's dawn!

Ach. Alas!
Before to-morrow's dawn, my gallant friends
Devoted to my service, even but now
So prompt for me to tread the savage waste
Or hoist the dubious sail on unknown seas
(Where never Israelite embark'd), are doom'd
Without remission, or reprieve, to try

The fatal pass, where late our brethren fell !
 There all the Gods that seem'd but now subdued
 Rally in gloomy legions and return
 That panic thro' our files, which Canaan's sons
 Thro' all their trembling borders felt so late !—

Phan. Was it the General's order ? did he seem
 To wear the changing look of dark fummise ?
 Did he select them for the dangerous post
 With lurking malice, hid in seeming praise ?

Ach. No—on my soul ! the noble veteran seem'd
 So wrapt in holy fear, and bent with grief
 For public honour lost, and heavenly wrath,
 (Altho' the cause was hid) that I'm assur'd
 He nothing doubts of me ! the sacred lots
 Before my faltering foot the entrance cross'd
 Had mark'd them for the tomb !

Phan. Be not dismay'd
 Again, your superstitious fear, so late
 With labour overcome, and argued down
 With pain, begins to cloud the sovereign light
 Of Reason, and of nature ! this defeat
 Shows the great power (if any power there be
 That rules those Israelites) or feeble grown
 Or fickle ; why should else those favour'd bands
 Who late, (like tygers, o'er the ruin'd fold)
 Sprung o'er yon city's prostrate walls and slew
 Matrons, and babes, and warriors, all confus'd,
 Now fly, like driven deer, before a foe

Less numerous and less warlike? is it thus
 They take possession of the promis'd land
 Is it with their dead bodies? what they gain'd
 By magic, or by chance, is lost! no more
 The elements, or Nature's secret powers
 Seem to fight for them! Ponder this, my friend!
 And be thine own right hand thy God, thy bands
 May yet return in triumph, or if not,
 The secret means are thine, and thine alone
 To levy others in their room; thy name
 Is not enroll'd, and Jericho has spoils
 Which none besides presume to touch!—

Ach.

My name

Is not enroll'd, and does not that involve
 The semblance of some mystic meaning?—

Phan.

What?—

Now I that boast not of supernal light
 No heavenly-gifted prophet, can perceive
 The workings of thy mind! thou thinkest the doom
 Of Heaven is pointed full at thee! that first
 It strikes thy friend with monitory blow
 To thee: Thus many, by their conscience rid
 And gull'd by priestly art, are led to tell
 The secrets of their souls, which else had slept
 In peace, and: Hence, bold resolution's hue
 "Is sicklied o'er by the pale cast of thought."—
 Those sudden, strange vicissitudes are calls
 On manly perseverance!

Ach.

Be it so !

But manly perseverance, without means.
 Will find it hard, if not impossible
 To gain her ends by solitary strength !

Phan. The star of evening to the deeper shade

Of night has scarcely yet resign'd the sky ;
 Behind yon palms she sets : the warning trump
 Proclaims the second watch, the silent hour
 Of gloom is often known to usher in
 Desponding thoughts, without the needless aid
 Of dark suggestion : Try this other band
 They too belong to Judah's tribe, to thee
 In blood ally'd, *they* too could aid thy flight
 And aid thy love : Our late misfortune throws
 Ominous conjecture on the sacred cause—
 Your machinations sooner will prevail
 Usher'd by gloomy discontent : it gives
 An instant entrance to the dangerous thought.

Ach. Besides what Mammon's glittering bribe may gain

And what the restless love of change, among
 Those fiery spirits, who disdain the lot
 Of present things : tho' Eden show'd around
 Her vegetable gold, with manna mixt,
 Still would they pant to climb the tow'ring hills
 That bound their view, to trace the burning sands
 Or plow, with ventrous keel, the wave unknown—
 Be these thy province, thy prompt eloquence
 That speaks a daring soul, unsated still

With things possess, by instant alchymy
 Of mind, transmutes them to that essence pure
 That suits our purpose, while less ductile souls
 Touch'd by the gleaming rays of unsunn'd ore
 Shall find their metal flow : away ! away !—
 Our centries are reliev'd ! see ! how they march
 Reluctant to the dangerous post !—their look
 Frowns mutiny, and shews, in dark presage
 Revolt, at least desertion ! either chance
 To us is most propitious ! part we here
 And to our different charge ! our post we know
 Remember, midnight finds us at my tent !

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II

Scene.—Another part of the Camp near the Tabernacle.

ENTER PHANUEL.

Oh that I were some God, to form anew
 Those sons of earth, and in their lifeless frames
 Some spirit to infuse ! those new come guards
 That fled before the feeble sons of *Asi*
 Fled, tho' they thought that some supernal power
 Marshall'd their troops to battle, now refuse
 To leave their post, tho' mild persuasion sooth'd
 Their souls, and more persuasive gold allur'd !—

What recent charm has fix'd the cowards feet
 So nimble in the flight, but now, when fast
 They fled before Perizzim's scythed cars!—
 It cannot be religious dread, for that :
 Had fixt their phalanx, firmer than the walls
 Of Jericho against the tide of war :
 Whate'er it be, I leave them to their fate
 Till earth to earth they grow, or turn'd to stone
 Stand like the monumental matron, chang'd
 To rock, by sad Gomorrah's fuming lake
 As fable tells ! Altho' in distant hints
 Of dubious import I explor'd their souls
 (To keep from danger clear, lest any dar'd
 Accuse me) still, I found them cold, quite cold!—
 Be they accurst ! but Achan must be steel'd
 To suit my purpose, lest he also swerve,
 Yet I have nearly from his bosom chac'd
 The pious leaven, from his nurse imbib'd
 And by the crafty Levite fed.—He now
 Is the sole anchor of my sinking hopes
 By love and strong ambition sway'd by turns
 He plies with easy bend to either breeze—
 Yet he and Zalmon are alike my foes
 Hated alike, alike they thwart my views
 Zalmon may fall in fight ! if he returns
 Achan and he are seeming friends. But soon
 The brittle bond of amity shall melt

Before Suspicion's breath! that task be mine—

But see the lover comes! what says my friend?

Phan. Hast thou prevail'd?

Ach.

I durst not press my suit,

But with due caution, and with solemn oaths

Enjoining secrecy: some to my views

Gave prompt admittance, some are doubtful still—

The bond of blood among their families

Gave easy entrance, but I dreaded yet

To try their Chief, altho' by blood ally'd

He's a fanatic, full of holy zeal!—

Phan. We can subsist without him, could we gain

But half his band to second our attempt

And bear your double treasure, where the name

Of Israel ne'er was heard!

Ach.

This day's defeat

Would fix a party ours, nor need we doubt

But flush'd with victory, the Canaanite

Will follow his first blow, and heap the field

With larger slaughter, Zalmon too may fall!—

Phan. If not, I have a charm for this hot youth

That soon will come like winter's frory breath

And lay his blooming honours low: But see

Where young Amaziah comes with looks of dread.

Ach. O my presaging soul! my friends are fall'n!

S C E N E II.

AMAZIAH, PHANUEL, ACHAN,

Ama. Too true thy sad conjecture ! I alone
Survive to bring the news ! of all thy band
Not one is left besides ! the hand of heaven
Or chance, or fate, with cruel scrutiny
Call'd them from every rank ! they fell the first
Then oh ! what slaughter follow'd !

Ach. How didst thou
Thyself escape ?

Ama. I bear my death along !—
One of gigantic bulk, unseen before
In all Perizzim's armies, fell'd our van
With oft repeated blows, and rushing in
With gory lance, like some commission'd fiend
'Twice twelve, the boldest of thy friends dispatch'd
To other worlds, I would have shunn'd the pest
And wheel'd amid the scattering war in vain—
He reach'd me, and his flying spear transfixt
My shoulder as thou seest, "yet live," he cry'd
"Live till thou findest thy friends disperst, and tell
"What thou hast seen," whate'er his words might mean

My message is deliver'd, and the load
Of life I here resign!——

[Dies.

Ach. Where will this fearful judgment stop at last?

Phan. Again this aguish fit! come! be a man
Why stand you thus amaz'd? now is the time
Or never, to impell the tardy fates,
And bid them favour thee, or dash thy hopes
For ever! Fortune sends a second chance
To shake the faith of yon desponding train
That guard the quarter where the lovely maid
Resides: This double overthrow will turn
The scale for us!—our tongue-ty'd eloquence
May now speak boldly, and before the sun
Bid them consult their safety, quit the camp
The Heaven-detested camp, and seek by flight
Their safety, ere the thunderbolt descends,
Already forg'd in yonder sanguine gloom
That frowns above!—

Ach. Would Heaven! before those lips
Were clos'd I had enquir'd if Zalmon lives.——

Phan. No matter, if he lives, he lives to us
His life, or death, are equal to our views!
Let us retire!—I see a hated foe
Approach! and see the General! his rent robes
And reverend locks besprent with dust, declare
The conflict of his soul! [Exeunt

S C E N E IV.

JOSHUA, PHINEAS,

Josh. 'Tis all in vain—the spirit of revolt
 Is spread so wide, our efforts to subdue
 The monster, but inflames its deadly rage
 The more! Oh!—had it pleas'd our gracious Lord
 Yet e'er I past yon self-dividing flood
 To call me hence!

Phin. Think what the mighty son
 Of Amram * suffer'd by their senseless broils!
 Before he reach'd our borders!

Josh. Amram's son?
 Oh my beloved master! lost, alas
 To me and Israel, soft, persuasive, mild
 Thou, only thou couldst bid the storm subside!
 Thy word like oil, could lay the turbid wave!
 But thou wast never hemm'd, (as I am now)
 By hostile nations, and domestic rage
 At once!

Phin. Say, does this poor, desponding plaint
 Become the soldier of his God? the King
 Of yonder hostile walls, who bends before

* Moses,

The shrine of Baalim, to a chizeled stone
 (By each imperial lust, in turn enchain'd)
 Could tell, that stern Adversity's dark hour
 Distinguishes the man, from him that wears
 Only the semblance ! yet the spreading plague
 Is partial only !

Josb. In our chosen bands
 It rages uncontroll'd, ev'n Judah's sons
 Forget their sovereign hopes !

Phin. To question Heaven
 And his mysterious ways, becomes us not.—

Josb. True, generous Levite ! thy example shews *
 That action, not complaint, at such an hour
 As this, becomes the man whose fervent zeal
 Flames in the cause of Heaven ! Let but thy word
 Sanction our daring, and we draw the sword,
 Lay waste yon seminary of revolt
 And hew away yon gangren'd limb, which spreads
 Infection to our vitals !

Phin. Let it spread !—
 The moment calls not for the sword, nor lance
 The rampart, nor the palisaded mound
 To fence our threat'ned lives ! but holy calm
 And resignation to whate'er the will
 Of heaven awards !

Josb. And shall we idly stand
 And see our foes o'erwhelm us ?

* Alluding to his destruction of the Israelites who worshipped Peor.

See Num. ch. 25. v. 7, 8.

Phin.

Heaven best knows

How to protect his own, whome'er he dooms
 To join the general ruin!—leave to heaven
 The method and the means! the loudest wind
 That shakes proud Lebanon, and bids his groves
 Bow their aerial heads, and kiss the soil
 Tho' seemingly without a rein it scours
 The fields of Æther, and by sea and land
 Ravages uncontroll'd, yet knows its bounds!—

Josb.

And am not I the minister of Heaven
 And can I dread discomfiture? I go—
 I cannot tamely bear to wield a sword
 And see those rebels to their God, at large
 Revel unchastis'd!—

Phin.

Go!—but if you do

You perish in your rashness!—yet be calm!—
 Perhaps a few short moments may produce
 The crisis; then if heaven commands thine arms
 To lift the sure-destroying sword! obey!—
 If not—presume not thou to snatch the rod
 And balance from his hand, who best can turn
 The course of things to punish or reward
 As he decrees: our weapons now are prayers
 To Heaven preferr'd, with unpolluted hands!

Josb.

Thy pardon, reverend Phineas! thou and Heaven
 Forgive my rash and hasty zeal!

Phin.

May Heaven

Forgive thee, and prepare thee yet to bear

New insults still with calmness ! let thy blood
 Preserve its temper'd pulse, thine eye forget
 To flame resentment, when thou seest the foe
 Even in this holy ground, invade our right
 And claim the execution of our laws
 From you, from us, the delegates of Heaven !
 Even at those sacred doors—The contest then
 (Remember this)—is Heaven's, and Heaven's alone !
 —The wonted sacrifice our presence calls
 Dread not the insulting Gentiles ! nearer cares
 Claim our attention now, to guard at home.—

[*Exeunt.*]

RE-ENTER ACHAN AND PHANUEL.

Phan. The General and the Priest are gone at last !—

Methought the veteran seem'd to menace high
 But crafty Phineas sooth'd him !—This portends
 Bright hopes to us, the factious spirit spreads
 Beyond our utmost hopes, my friend !—couldst thou
 Have thought, our cautious arts, essay'd with fear
 So soon would spring to such a noble head
 As makes the delegate of Moses fear
 And to the tabernacles holy fence
 Retire for safety ? But to other thoughts
 The crisis calls us !—the suspended war
 Sleeps, till the cause of our defeat be found !—
 Zalmon returns, and to the charge succeeds
 Perhaps, of those prepared bands, which thou

Hadst led to different triumphs—but for him

We have provided!—

Achan. [*Seemingly disturbed.*] In another spot

Than this, I rather would complete my schemes!

Phan. Falter not now! but think, the bounds are past,

And it is much too late to dream of flight!—

Steel thy weak spirit! think of Zalmon's fate

And thine, this moment is the balance weigh'd!—

—To-morrow, if thou fail'st to-night, arrives

With tardy disappointment in its train

Perhaps detection. Think, thy secret now

Rests in too many hands, to be conceal'd

Much longer! think of love, of Zidon think

Of empire and of glory!—spread around

The fault on others, if thou meanst thyself

To 'scape!—the shrine discloses! haste and pay

Thy adorations, nor neglect the time

Thine own petitions to prefer—adieu!

I must not here be seen, a proselyte

Claims not admittance to your holy rites

Till the due season!

[*Exit. Achan.*]

Phan. Now is my time, let me escape away

And shun the tempest, gathering at my heels!—

Scene opens, and discovers the outer Court of the Tabernacle.

JOSHUA, ACHAN, CROWD OF ISRAELITES AT PRAYER.

Achan I too must join the suppliant, lest I seem
aside. To scorn their orisons and cause a doubt
 Of my deep purpose ! But for what to pray
 I know not, nor what demon to address,
 One seems this hour to rule, another soon
 Usurps the sky, and turns the wavering scale
 Of destiny at pleasure,—thou ! whoe'er
 That favourest amorous thefts, and lend'st the veil
 Of darkness to their flight, oh seize awhile
 The sceptre in this anarchy of things
 And lead us to the destin'd port, beyond
 The search and vengeance of our foes ! oh save
 The lovely maid who rules this throbbing heart !
 From haughty Zalmon save her ! oh ! remove
 That jealous rival's eye from the strict watch
 To night, and ever may her solemn shade
 With welcome shroud thy amorous thefts conceal !

TO THEM PHINEAS.

Suspend your orisons awhile, for Heaven
 Yet frowns upon us, nor vouchsafes the sign
 Of bland acceptance to our prayers ? the cause
 That bars the gate of mercy, is not known —

But not by radiant URIM, nor by dreams
 Does he yet condescend to speak his will
 The slow descending glory, * which so oft
 Sate on our sacred roof, distinguished far
 In dazzling radiance reaching to the sky
 Like the proud pillars that adorn the courts
 Of empyrean splendour, long has ceas'd
 To pierce yon cloudy cope, and vest at large
 Our tall pavilions, and the peopled walks
 (That cross the camp) in glory !

Josb. Is there aught
 Committed, or neglected, to incense
 Our sovereign ruler ?

Phin. That is only known
 To Israel's God, but yonder fields of Ai
 Drench'd by the noblest blood of Jacob, tell
 Too plain, his kindled wrath !

Josb. Is there no means
 To deprecate his rage ?

Phin. Contagion lurks
 Somewhere among us, or our prayers were heard,
 But in this vast assembly, is there one
 Whose eye sagacious, or whose guiding hand
 Can teach us how to trace the lurking pest
 And drag it into day ? On him we call
 Let him stand boldly forth and save the tribes

* The Shekinah or Divine Presence.

From the infliction of another blow

More dreadful than the past.—

Achan. [*Aside.*] Be firm, my soul!

Phin. Nay, if the guilty man be here, I dare
Pronounce in Heaven's dread name, his pardon seal'd
If by confession he atones his crimes.

Achan Vengeance and Love assist me! or I'm lost

aside. —Ye soul-subduing powers of eloquence

My flattering organs aid!

To them. Behold the man

Who, unpresuming on the sacred gift

Of prophecy or prescience, but impell'd

By public love alone, with suppliant voice

Prays your indulgence, while his lips disclose

Things he can prove, and to your wisdom leaves

The just conclusion thence to be inferr'd!

Phin. Speak out, and boldly!

Job. Thou hast nought to fear

I know thee sage and noble! Achan's name

Forbids us to expect a futile charge

Or feebly grounded!

Ach. Joshua! thy support

Is kind, and comes in season, for my voice

(Never till now in such unwelcome task

Employ'd) must publish names—ah much endear'd

To me, to all, by deeds of genuine worth,

And more, by lineal honours!—Would to Heaven

Beneath yon fatal rampires my pale corse

Had fall'n, before to my sad lot it fell
 To trumpet forth a friend's disgrace, before
 This presence, but your late tremendous charge
 And this august assembly conjure down
 All selfish passions, every partial thought,
 (Tho' for my friend), and I am Israel's all!—
 Avaunt! ye private sympathies! ye charms
 Ye social ties of single soul to soul!—
 Avaunt! there is no pulse in this sad frame
 But for the public beats.

Josh.

He speaks, as Heaven

Had now inspir'd him! Phineas! now, at last,
 Expect an answer to your prayers! O now
 No more the haughty Canaanite shall line
 The pass, and intercept with double death
 Our sinking legions!

Phin.

Yet suppress thy zeal!—

See his lips labour, and his frame, convuls'd
 Beneath the deadly secret seem to sink!—
 I fear some much belov'd, much honour'd name
 Will pass those lips, and some great chieftain's doom
 Will send the loud lament along your lines
 In oft repeated sorrow!

Ach.

Thou hast guess'd

O reverend Priest! aright! but be no blame
 To his accuser! would my lips were clos'd
 In Death's eternal trance, e'er I were forc'd
 To name the name of Zalmon, but in terms

Due to my friendship, and his matchless worth
 For matchless worth is his ! But oh ! I fear
 His partial passion for a lovely maid
 Among our captives, whom his thoughtless love
 Designs to wed, and mix his sacred line
 With Gentiles, and with slaves, draws down this plague.

Phin. Before this tribunal none is condemn'd
 Unheard, let Zalmon strait be call'd, and thou
 Achan ! prepare thee to support thy charge
 With clearest circumstance, before the face
 Of Israel and her God, assembled here !

Josb. Go, heralds ! and assemble here in haste
 By sound of trump the universal name
 Of Israel by their tribes and families
 To tend this awful trial and to learn
 By terrible example how to keep
 With stricter care, their theocratic law !

Phin. Woe to the guilty, for behold ! above,
 The clouds, in gloomy files, around the point
 Of noon, diverge, and yonder deep serene
 Shews the descending pomp of them, who tend
 The sovereign lamp of truth ! *her* piercing beam
 Shall soon dispel the dim Tartarean fogs
 Of falsehood from the mind ! *her* holy dawn
 Shall lay the secret regions of the soul
 In empyrean lights unwelcome day !
 Touch'd by that beam, the lurking pest, tho' now
 It 'scape the keenest sight, shall soon disclose

Its horrible dimensions !—Sound the trump !—
 Raise the broad ensign of Jehovah high !
 Let every soul appear, who draws his life
 From Jacob's hallowed stem, for all must pass
 In long review before the judging eye
 And clear their innocence, or shew the cause
 Why Israel's sons, whom nature's subject powers
 Obey, are baffled by their Gentile foes !

[Exeunt, Phineas and Joshua go into the Temple.]

Scene.—Another part of the Camp.

Zal. And can this visitation point at me ?
 My love, unsanction'd by the seal of Heaven
 Perhaps, has laid the pride of Israel low !—
 I love thee, Rahab ! in this faithful breast
 Thy matchless form, thy matchless merit stamps
 Thy image, never by the hand of Time
 Or Fortune, to be spoil'd ! Thy chosen youth
 Thy Abdon, thou beheld'st to death devote,
 And hadst the power to change our blood for his !—
 But oh ! thy nobleness of mind, thy faith
 In Heaven, disdain'd the purchase of his life
 By perfidy, by breach of sacred trust——
 Our lives were in thy hands ! upon thy word
 Our breath depended ! thou ! unequall'd maid !

Couldst have redeem'd a husband and a fire
 By giving us to Fate !—thy nuptial hand
 Would dignify the most ennobled name
 Among our most distinguished tribes—and I—
 Shall I resign the treasure ?—who besides
 Can urge a claim so powerful ? To secure
 The blessing mine, from Judah's regal tribe
 (To whom the sceptre is by promise given)
 I draw my lineal blood, and justly claim
 Her eldest honours.—Let me muse awhile !—
 Is there no other duty to oppose
 The calls of Passion ?—yes—these very ties
 Of blood—and all the honours of my race
 All ! all united, urge their general plea
 And tell me that I live not to myself
 But to my country, to my lineal claims
 And to the honours of my regal stem !
 High are the promises to Judah given
 Of mystic import : from his root shall rise
 A name by prophets, and by priest proclaim'd
 The first on earth, the favour'd of the skies !
 Perhaps to spring from me !—and shall I take
 An alien to my bed ? tho' eminent
 In beauty, and with mental charms endow'd
 Above the daughters of our tribes ?—perhaps
 Heaven favours not this union ! Heaven forbid !
 That I should match against thy sovereign will !
 That my example should encourage more

To cull their spouses from the race accurst
 Whom Heaven pursues with vengeance ! tho' this maid
 Be faultless, and beholds her people's crimes
 With just abhorrence, others less reserv'd
 Who chuse their loves, at random, by the look
 Allur'd, might think their impious choice, by mine
 Amply excus'd ; and 'mongst our martial tribes
 Disseminate the vile contagion round
 Of idol worship, and her odious train
 Of vile pollutions from their spouses learn'd—
 —Israel might mourn, for many a luckless day
 The bane of my alliance ! this deserves
 My serious thoughts : the general interdict
 Forbade our tribes to touch the spoils accurst
 Of conquer'd Jericho ! perhaps *that* word
 Included all, the captives and the stores
 Alike ! and shall I dare, with impious step
 To rush beyond the bounds prescrib'd by Heaven
 With awful prohibition ? what transferr'd
 Those forfeit regions, from their ancient Lords
 To us, but Canaan's crimes ? they stood subdued
 By Vice, before the delegated sword
 Of Israel, thinn'd their legions, and if we
 Their victors, learn not first to rule at *home*
 Learn not self-conquest, and to square our wills
 To Heavens' behest ; the very land, incens'd
 Will sink beneath us, and o'erwhelm our hopes
 As yon fall'n towers can witness ! Heaven be prais'd

I never yet my passion to the fair
 Explain'd in words, she well indeed could guess
 By my demeanour, that my heart was her's :
 But—lately when a secret hour I stole
 To visit the fair Canaanite, I found
 The lustre of her eye was lost, her look
 Bore symptoms of dejection, deeper far
 Than for her country, even for Abdon's fate
 She shew'd before !
 That Achan loves her, by undoubted signs
 To me is clear, and Achan has a form,—
 —Has merit to secure the coyest heart
 And kindle fires beneath the coldest ice
 Of faintly chastity If he has wak'd
 A mutual flame, perhaps, th' enamour'd pair
 Fear to confess their passion, lest I urge
 My prouder claim, and bid the general voice
 Swell the demand with popular applause
 And lineal honours, to devote the maid
 To me !—I scorn the thought—yet must I lose
 Sotamely this distinguished prize ?—resign
 My heart, to heal a lovesick warrior's sighs !
 — It is a dreadful conflict—but the more
 Becoming Zalmon !—then, this instant hour
 While my resolves are warm, while Glory calls
 To her I dedicate ! and if my prayers
 Can learn that Achan rules her heart, this voice
 —May it be never tun'd to sing thy praise

Glory of Israel! may this recreant hand
 No longer wield thy delegated sword
 Against thy rebels! If I fail to cure
 Her sorrows and my friend's—that friend shall find
 In me a zealous advocate, beyond
 His hope, for less would misbecome the name
 And more than this, becomes the man, whose race
 Is deem'd to bless our tribes in years to come!

[*Exit.*

End of the SECOND ACT.

ACT III.—SCENE I.

The Court of the Tabernacle, the Glory descending over it.

JOSHUA, PHINEAS, ZALMON, ACHAN, ISRAELITES,
 ASSEMBLED BY THEIR TRIBES.

Flin. A moment yet by Providence is given
 (Before the fount of mercy, closing fast
 Bids kindling Vengeance waik her dreadful round)
 For penitence to urge her latest plea
 And bathe her crimes in no successful tears!—
 —Arrest the moment, e'er it fleets away
 Ye who are conscious of a crime!—to you

Achan ! I first apply ! It much concerns
 Him, who presumes to taint a brother's fame
 Before this dread tribunal, to explore
 With cautious eye, the structure of his charge
 Its basis and its strength, for, if a flaw
 Be found, tho' previous to a single ray
 Of scrutiny, the swift pervading flame
 Shall crumble it to nothing : Zalmon ! thou
 'Gainst whom his allegation is gone forth*
 Must think that no permission yet is given •
 For Israel's sons, to tie the nuptial bond
 With Gentiles, and with strangers, and if aught
 Of worldly views, or passion prompts your mind
 On Heaven's dread silence to presume, and frame
 Laws for your conduct, let the present hour
 (If thine own soul arraigns thee) be employ'd
 As suits thy former character and worth.——

Ach. If I be deem'd.——

Phin. —No vindication now!——

The time allows not that !—I must retire—
 And find what means the awful name appoints
 Whether by lot, or oracle to shew
 The secret pest that saps our holy strength
 And lay our glories low !

[*Exit into the Tabernacle.*]

Zal. Achan ! my friends !—

Say why is this ? is Zalmon to be call'd
 Hither without accuser ?

Josb.

No impatience

In look or thought this sacred presence taint !—
 The accuser stands before thee !—thou prepare
 For thy defence, but be all passion far
 And all complaint ! tho' much, I must confess,
 Thy fervour shews like innocence, and well
 I know thy worth, it yet becomes not me
 Thus to prejudge thy cause ! In other hands
 Thy doom or absolution rests !

Zal.

To me

All this is wonderful !—and Achan too
 My bosom friend ! who shar'd my inmost soul
 He my accuser ! He !—Oh sacred Faith !—
 But I am more than calm, I'm confident
 That yon dread scrutinizing eye will shew
 What I have been to him, and what to Heaven !

TO THEM FROM THE TABERNACLE.

Phis.

Summon the heads of Israel ! be the lots
 Twice six, in equal number to our tribes—
 Soon like a tainted sheep, whose breath infects
 The flock, the tribe condemn'd shall stand aloof
 An alien from its brethren, till the hand
 Of Heaven explores its families around
 And sifts them man by man.—

[*The lots are cast.*]

—Aboliah ! name the lot.

Abol.

—The tribe of Judah—

Ach. [*Aside.*] Yet be firm my heart.—

Josh. O Zalmon ! Zalmon ! have I liv'd to see

Aside. Thy blooming honours, matchless in the field

So tainted ? Oh my fall'n, degenerate friend !

Thy lapse has loos'd the strictest ties that bind

Society ! for who will trust the man

Who bears the most conspicuous signs of worth !—

—Pronounce him hypocrite !—and him whose faith

Depends upon his merit, simple, weak,

And credulous as infancy !——

Phin. No more !——

to him. This passion well befits thee !—but the rites

Are interrupted !—fling the counted lots

Into the urn, and be the sacred sum

Equal in number to the reverend heads

Of families in Judah !——

[*The lots again are cast.*]

——What appears ?

Abol. The name of Zerah.

Zal. Now to Heaven be praise !

The stem of Phares and his sons are free !

Josh. Zalmon ! I joy to see thee thus absolv'd !—

But mourn to think thy tribe must still supply

The guilty head !

Ach. [*In great agitation*] One word before the lots

Proceed !

Phin. The time of recollection's past !

The scrutiny must now proceed !

Act.

I must

And will be heard!—If you would shun the blame
 Of management! of fraud! of partial care
 For Zalmon's safety, bid your slave of state
 Your ready implement, whose dext'rous hands
 Obsequious to your eye, the lots dispose
 By the dark intimations of your will—
 Bid him resign to more impartial care
 To some unbyas'd sage, by all the tribes
 In general vote elected, else the blood
 Of him who falls be on your head!

Phin. Be it as you demand! assembled tribes
 If ye object not, Achan's reverend sire
 Shall match the lots to Zerah's families,
 A lot for every household, who derive
 Their blood from Judah's younger line. But ye
 Speak your denial or assent at once!

All. Let Zabdi be the man!—our choice is Zabdi!

Phin. Achan, we wait alone for thy assent!
 Dost thou object to him?

Act.

I own, with joy
 Thy justice and submit [*aside*] if Phanuel's care
 Have mov'd the treasures, yet I may escape
 Detection and pursue his flight!

Phin.

Thy faith
 And zeal, O reverend Zabdi! all the tribes
 Acknowledge, thou dispose the sacred lots
 By Zerah's families, and shake the urn! [*Lots cast.*

Phin. Whose lot emerges?

Joshua The searching eye of Heaven!—'tis Zabdi's name!

looking at the O spare the reverend fire a further test!—

Lots. Behold his agony!

Phin. He must proceed!

No retractation now!—he must proceed—

And, with a soldier's fortitude, sustain

The final trial!

Josh. How the awful doom

Delays, in dreadful circuit hovering wide

As the high soaring bird of prey, that views

A timorous flock of village fowl beneath

Contracts in narrower space, with deathful aim

His wide aerial range, in short'ned flight,

Till on the destin'd bird, with shadowy plume

At once he settles, and his sanguine beak

The screaming victim rends! the sacred lot

Thus circles round the tribe; dispensing dread

Thro' all her quaking families it moves

Till fixt at last, it marks the menac'd head

And holds it high, a monument of wrath

A warning to the nations! [*Lots cast again.*

[*Joshua examines the Lots.*

Zabdi—oh

Unhappy fire, O Phineas! mark the name

Of Achan!

Phin. To the God of Abraham

Be praise! who kindly fav'd his servant's lips

The painful and invidious task to name
 The criminal !---Joshua ! his guilt was known
 Before, and in my hands the clearest proofs
 Were lodg'd : nor wonder thou that I conceal'd
 My knowledge ! you beheld what arrogance
 Was his ! how he defy'd the scrutiny !
 And, when he found the noble Zalmon freed
 By heavenly sentence, dar'd to fix on us
 The taint of prejudice, and partial views
 Unmerited as vile ! Had we accus'd
 This man by usual process, had we call'd
 The witnesses to his guilt, his frontless pride
 Had tax'd the spotless tribunal of Heaven
 With foul injustice, or presum'd to find
 In the detector's hand, th' unseemly stain
 Of bribes, suborning perjury ! But now
 His pleas are spent, he scorn'd the soothing voice
 Of mercy when it call'd, he madly dar'd
 To hurl defiance 'gainst the lifted hand
 Of boundless wrath incens'd, he deem'd the eye
 Of dread Omniscience clos'd, his justice warp'd
 By favour, and the sanction of his laws
 His truth, and his unchangeable decrees
 The sport of fickle chance, absorb'd and lost
 In the blind waste of chaos and old night!--
 Heaven, to confute his impious pleas at once
 Made the sad father's hand, (as you have seen)
 The instrument to doom the son ! the fire

Deserves our pity, but the son has clos'd
The gates of mercy on himself!

Josb.

Yet say

Unhappy youth! hast thou presum'd to touch
The interdicted spoils?---confess your crimes
Make that atonement to the injur'd state!
And as your sin disgrac'd our holy cause
Let your unfeign'd acknowledgment declare
High Heaven's omniscience, and his justice prov'd
On thee! so shall thy fault, thus far aton'd
Contribute to his glory, and our good
By thy example!

Ach.

Deep within my tent

The treasures lie!

Josb.

Aboliah! go and search!

Zab.

Oh Joshua! may this fault'ring tongue presume
To plead for pity! see these hoary hairs!
Think on the battles we have fought together!
The weary leagues of yonder burning wild
We travel'd o'er, and spare the main support
Of my declining age! He has confess'd!---
---The glory of our God by him remains
Unfollied! his omniscience unimpeach'd!--
Let him survive, altho' he live with shame!

Phin.

Patience old man! he has not yet confess'd
The motives to his crime!--say hapless youth
What led thee to this error?

Ach. Spare my pain !---

'Twas love of your fair captive !

Josb. How could love

(A generous passion) to ignoble deeds

Impell a son of Judah ?

Ach. Tho' I lov'd

I yet despair'd of favour ! then the sense

Of my demerit and my rival's worth

Led me to try what riches might avail.

I meant (and I had brib'd a trusty band

To aid my purpose) to have borne her hence.

Josb. Whither ?

Ach. To Zidon.

Josb. How didst thou expect

For her or thee, a refuge with the race

Who live in darkness and the shades of death

To every lust enslav'd ? Hadst thou resolv'd

The God of Israel to renounce, and live

A Gentile ! an apostate ! say was this

Thy final hope ?

Ach. I know not where my crimes

Had led me ! Phanuel too with soothing art

Fed high my hopes of honours from his state

And dignities at Zidon, by my wealth

Procur'd, but far beyond my merit !

Josb. Call

That Phanuel hither !——

ENTER ABOLIAH.

Abol.

He is fled, my Lord! —

This as I came, I learn'd ; some slaves with him
 Were seen departing. In the tent we found
 The cavern open'd, and the stores purloin'd
 All but these talents, and this sumptuous bale
 Of Babylonian texture, as it seems! —

Achan Then Phaul has betray'd me! — oh the pangs
starts. Of falsehood found beneath a friendly form!

Zal. I would not pain thee! — yet with deep regret
 I mourn to think of Passion's boundless power,
 That love which led thee to suspicions foul
 Of me, thy natural friend! Hadst thou but known
 And trusted me, this hour of guilt and shame
 Had never been your lot!

Ach.

Didst thou not love

The beauteous Rahab? did I not behold
 Thy passion sparkle in thine eyes, when first
 Their beams met her's? Oh Zalmon! could I stand
 (I know myself and thee) say could I stand
 A moment's competition? wouldst thou give
 Such treasure to thy friend? and should the friend
 Subdue the *lover*, could I be the man
 That had deserv'd her of thee, could the maid
 Who once had lifted her aspiring mind
 To be ally'd to Zalmon, look on me? —

Zal. Whatever was, or might have been, shall now
 For ever in oblivion lie ! 'Twas love
 To her, I know, that woke thy seeming hate
 To me, as such thy failing I forgive,
 As freely as I hope to be forgiven
 At Mercy's throne! [To Phineas and Joshua.

If I have aught deserv'd
 In council, or in arms, if Judah's tribe
 Has any claim on Israel, all her fires
 Shall join with this unhappy reverend man
 To claim compassion for this sentenc'd youth
 Thro' weakness fall'n, and by a Gentile's art
 Beguil'd!

Zab. Now may that heaven whom thou aspiest
 In deeds of mercy and long-suffering love
 Thus to resemble, be thy great reward
 Thou noble youth!——

Phin. Young man! it cannot be!
 Zabdi! I pity thee! but Heaven requires
 A dread example in this crisis given
 To keep your loyalty to Heaven's high power
 Unflaw'd and steadfast, and to steel our troops
 For the ensuing conflict! if that God
 We reverence, deigns to take in full account
 For all his crimes, the transitory pangs
 Of death, be satisfied!——

Ach. I do not wish
 For life!—for what is life, with lasting shame?

I hate to view the light, the brand of theft
 Stamp'd by each eye and burning in my front
 As I should walk the camp ! I but implore
 One moment of indulgence, while I ask
 My noble friend, (alas too lately known)
 A single question !—Zalmon ! from your words
 (Tho' dark of import) on my soul there seem'd
 To dawn a prospect, of a deed of friendship
 Which from your innate modesty you meant
 To bury in oblivion !

Zal.

Ask to know

No more, the knowledge would but pain thee now !

Ach.

Oh ! no ! my friend ! whate'er would cheapen life
 Would be most welcome now ! whate'er would serve
 To wean me from the world, which as I gaze
 Seems fleeting from me, whatsoe'er would make
 My penitence more poignant and severe,
 Whate'er would point the salutary pang
 That stings the torpid mind to better life
 A life of virtue—were most welcome now !—
 Nor Zalmon ! be a niggard of the boon !—
 Give the sharp medicine ! tho' it pierce the heart !
 It yet may cure the soul, and endless time
 May thank thee, in the worlds beyond the sun !

Zal.

Thy eloquence has mov'd me —hapless youth !
 Sad victim of temerity ! and lost
 By thy despondence lost !—by diffidence
 In me ! thou mightest have better known thy friend !—

But 'tis too late to blame!—thou wouldst not own
 Thy love to me; I doubted first, and soon
 By accident I found it! Tho' my flame
 For Rahab, burn'd with tenfold fervour, still
 I doubted Heaven's concurrence; and withheld
 My passion with strong rein, I saw *her* sad
 And *thee* desponding, I suspected thence
 A secret, hopeless flame had touch'd your hearts
 With mutual fervour, and I meant (just Heaven!
 Would I had made my purpose known to thee!)
 I meant, with all my care to scrutinize
 The lovely strangers heart, and, if I found
 Thy image there, the influence I had us'd
 To draw the secret thence, had made her own
 Her passion! then to thee had I disclos'd
 The glad discovery, and resign'd my claim,
 Nay I have reason (but alas—why tell
 The cruel secret now) to think her heart
 Was thine! But I have said too much! forgive
 Thy thoughtless friend—thy colour comes and goes!
 O Achan, how thine eyeballs glare! thy limbs
 Speak thy mind's torture!—they are all convuls'd
 What shakes thee thus? what speechless agony?

Achan, No—I have found my speech! and would to Heaven
after a My sight were gone! eternal darkness, hide
long
pause. Oh hide me from his sight! an injur'd friend!
 His eyes are blasting!—cover me ye hills!
 Pile rocks on rocks upon me! hurl me down

To central darkness, where no dawning star
 May wake my pangs, nor light upbraid me more !
 I plann'd his ruin, while he meant me life
 And happiness ! yet do I live to look
 Upon him ?——

Zal. Why this agony ? thy friend
 Forgives thee, and may Heaven forgive thee too !
Ach. Still deeper torment of remorse ! begone !
 Avaunt ! thy sight is wounding ! that mild look
 Harrows my soul like scorpions stings !—away !
 Ye walls of Jericho ! would I had fall'n
 Beneath thy thund'ring ruins ! lead me hence
 Conduct me to my fate !—
 Left this right hand, the direful instrument
 Of black despair, another lesson learn
 From her dire lips, and with determin'd rage
 Cut short my being !

Phin. Lead him to my tent
 Till we assuage this tumult of his soul
 Now far,—oh far unfit to meet his God
 (In this wild frenzy) ! as a victim due
 To justice, he must fall, but potent prayers
 And Heaven's blest influence must expel the fiend
 That labours for his ruin ! lead him hence !

[*Ex. Omn.*]

F I N I S.

To crawl back, when no longer
My will my power, nor strength nor moral
I stand the test, what he meant me
And hunched! yet do I hear his
Upon him:—
Why this agony? my friend
Forgive me, and may I think to give thee too?
Still deeper wounds of wounds I began!
Faintly, the light is waning; I can still look
Hear my soul the agonies there!—away!
No words, friends! would I had left
Behind my hand, my pain! I had not power
Conduct me to my rest—
Not this right hand, the dust of dust
Of black despair, and then I lay
From her the day and with darkness I rose
Can there my being?—
I laid him to my ear
I'll be with him till death of his soul
Now, then—on the road to meet his God
(In this wild frenzy) as a victim due
To justice, he must fall, but potent prayer
And Heaven's high influence round about the head
That labours for his soul, I had him hence!
[Exit.]

FINIS

THE

ROYAL MESSAGE,

A

DRAMATIC POEM.

P E R S O N S.

DAVID.

ABSALOM.

ACHITOPHEL.

HUSHAI.

BENAIAH.

JOAB.

URIAH.

ADRIEL.

ELIEZER.

JONADAB.

SHIMEI.

ABDON.

ONIAH.

QUEEN.

TIRZAH.

BATHSHEBA.

Scene—Jerusalem.

THE
ROYAL MESSAGE.

ACT I.

*Scene.—A street in Jerusalem—A mournful procession seen
at a distance.*

BENAIAH AND HUSHAI MEETING.

Ben. WELCOME from Rabbah's camp!—your stay was short—
I trust your mission prosper'd?

Hush. Friend—all hail
The success of my mission lies in clouds
Till time shall draw aside the mystic veil,
But, say, what means this solemn pomp? It seems
Attended by half Judah! some disaster
Has blank'd the face of Salem, do they bend
Their march to Israel's holy shrine, to seek
For aid or counsel?

Ben. Nought of holy import
 Conducts the pomp, but sacrilege and guilt
 To *one* indeed confin'd : the crowd, are free
 Tho' touch'd with honest and indignant grief
 To find so foul a taint infect their name.

Husb. Is it such guilt, as justice cannot reach ?

Ben. It can !

Husb. What hinders then the needful stroke
 That lops the foul infected limb away ?

Ben. Now they come near !—say, canst thou recognize
 That reverend form that leads the mourning train ?

Husb. Can I believe my sight ! 'Tis Nathan's self
 The holy man ! Heavens !—how serene he looks
 Amid the general woe !

Ben. Yet in his looks
 Seest thou what kindling indignation gleams
 At times ? and how his rapid eye-beam darts
 Into futurity, and what a glance
 Of anger mixt with sorrow oft he throws.

Husb. What can it mean
 In such a faintly bosom, long estrang'd
 From human passions, such disorder'd starts
 Such flaws, as seem to shake his aged frame,
 Such agony, such hear-tfelt grief, as paints
 His visage, seem of some mysterious themes
 With more than human organ to discourse !

Ben. You saw him calm, but now,—he sooth'd the crowd

In the most dreadful hurricane of rage

That ever threaten'd change.

Husb. What mov'd their wrath?

Ben. The strange and frontless guilt
Of Nathan's son, to whom th' indulgent fire
Had given his ALL, and that inhuman wretch
(Spite of his double sanctity, compos'd
Of prophet and of father) forc'd him thence
(With insult, next to outrage,) in the eye
Of noon and Judah's sons, assembled round
Who gaz'd with horror on this impious deed.

Husb. Why, all things seem revers'd—how bore the crowd
Th' abominable fact?

Ben. Their fury swell'd,
And seem'd beyond the power of aught, but Heaven
To sooth—when, with authoritative tone
That seem'd to palsy every lifted hand
And quench the fire in every sparkling eye
The fire commanded, and they spar'd the son—
“Go! take my farewell to the King” he said
(To a young friend, that stood dejected by)
“And tell him what you saw” then past along
Self-sentenc'd, self-exil'd. The mourning crowd
That for a benediction press around
Have thus delay'd his exit.

[*Procession passes by,—some Israelites
remain behind.*]

Husb.

This vile for

Had never dar'd this outrage, but he knew
The King's aversion to his reverend sire !

Ben.

In days of old, a prophet's mystic deeds
Were often (like the nightly waving sign

That leads the vaward of the coming storm)

An awful harbinger of Heavenly wrath

That figur'd forth disastrous days to come :

Their actions speak, when words are found to fail

Thus may it be once more !

To any ears, but thine, I should not trust

My thoughts, but this late coldness in the King

To his best friends in general, make his hate

To Nathan less prodigious.—How he sinks

From the fraternity of angels, down

To mingle with the common mass of men !—

Oh what a change ! since with yon reverend sage

He us'd to mount beneath the morning star

To Olivets calm brow, like Amram's heir

There half the journey of the summer sun

Beneath her hallow'd bowers abstracted fate

With the rapt prophet, and with kindling eye

And attitude of wonder, catch afar

The strong delineations of that hand

Which trac'd the pageants of the times unborn

Thick rising to Imagination's glance

Like atoms in the sun's unfolding beam !

Oft would they traverse all the sacred hill

As if that lofty range, in time to come
 Were meant the scene of some heroic deed
 Or second revelation of the law
 Of Heaven, like Horeb's summit : but since then
 Late, in the gleam of twilight, mute and sad
 The prophet of the alienated King
 Has oft been seen to wander there alone
 There, oft he seem'd in fixt and leaden pause
 To muse awhile, then, on a sudden, rapt
 With strong emotion and irregular glance
 He scann'd the green lawns, and the shady bowers
 As if they all seem'd conscious of the change—
 The very dregs of Israel feel the change
 And like foul vapours, by the sun exhal'd
 They mount in mutinous revolt, and hide
 The orb of majesty in dim eclipse.

Ben. They feel the weight of glory, and bow down
 By trophies and by taxes doubly prest.
 Our anarchy at home, and fame abroad
 Are like the spasms of an expiring man
 Who seems to grapple with a nerve of steel
 Tho' Death's cold siege his lab'ring heart assails.

[*Shout.*

Husb. Now, like the fiery fever's rising rage,
 The people's fury threat the public weal
 With wild delirium and misrule.—Behold
 How the wide tumult fluctuates ! now they shout

As if some demon, in the seemly mask
Of popularity had fir'd their souls.

Ben. You guess aright—it is that artful fiend
That, in the shape of Absalom, purloins
The people's loyalty, and, in its stead
With unfelt skill infuses in their veins
Sedition's deadly bane.—Let us retire
And mark the demagogue's perfidious art.

[Retire to one side.]

S C E N E II.

ABSALOM—ISRAELITES.

Abf. It must not be, my friends ! my loyalty
So combates with my feelings for your woes
That I must fly the strong seducing charm
Or deviate from the strict and narrow path
That filial duty points ! The royal wrath
Already burns, because I dar'd to ask
Some relaxation of your bonds ! alas !
My voice is discord in my father's ear
It sounds a raven's note ! some other strain
More tuneable may reach the regal sense
And touch the nerve of pity ! They, whose spells
Build up the high, invifible mound, that bars

All access from the people to their King,
 Can seal his eyes, when the inhuman son
 Expells his father, and let Piety
 Be chac'd with scorn from Salem's sacred streets.
 Yet should I lift my voice at Israel's wrong
 How would they conjure up the deadly forms
 Of foul revolt, and charge me with the crime
 Of most unnatural treason? Let this plead
 Your friend's excuse, who must in silence mourn
 But dare not vent his grief in aught but tears
 Farewell my friends! be patient, and resign'd.
 [*Exeunt severally Absalom and Israelites.*]

MANENT HUSHAI AND BENAIAH.

Ben. Such is the oil that subtle Arlist pours
 Upon the flame, and bids it blaze the more;
 His secret machinations cannot still
 Be hid, as now; the conflagration soon
 (I fear) will blaze his practice to the world
 And show the danger, when beyond a cure.

Husb. O for a man to cross the deadly spell!
 A friend to King and people both at once
 Whose worth might add a dignity, and give
 His words due aim and weight to reach the ear
 Of monarchs with effect; and touch the soul!
 Not like those random and uncertain shafts
 Of declamation, wing'd by every wind
 That fluttering fly, and fall without a scope. —

Ben. Unless the mandate be already given
 To the destroying angel not to spare,
 I know the man could stand within the breach,
 Could stop th' invading pest and teach the King
 To ward the danger off, a man beloved
 By Israel, and his monarch's chosen friend !

Husb. Name him !

Ben. Your eyes were witness to his worth
 Not many days ago !

Husb. Uriah !

Ben. He

Or none, could heal the growing malady
 Which else might turn a gangrene !

Husb. Hope suggests
 That the late message of the King portends
 Immediate exaltation, and high trust
 To him—some powerful reasons could be given.

Ben. True—friend !—and so I thought, when I perceiv'd
 No common messenger employ'd, but one
 Whose searching eye thro' courts and camps pervades
 And like a sun-beam spies the latent ill.

Husb. To me such courtly language—from a friend—

Ben. Pardon me—but I guess'd (tho' little skill'd
 Or studious in the mystic things of state
 To pry) that, not alone to call the friend
 Of David, you were sent, but to explore
 Whether, with fervent zeal, or lukewarm love
 In Israel's camp the General's name is breath'd.

Hufb. You know the humours of a camp, my friend !
 How liberal of reproach against their chief
 Even him that all would bleed for—but in Joab
 I fear that jealous and malignant spirit
 Still lives, that cost the friend of Saul so * dear.

Ben. What reason have you to suspect so deep ?

Hufb. The mandate of his monarch he receiv'd
 With martial dignity, but, when he learn'd
 The message for Uriah, o'er his check
 Past, in a twinkling, all the varying hues
 Of close conflicting passion, till his art
 Seren'd the ruffling storm ; that night I stay'd,
 Next morn I fought the General ! but I found
 Admittance was deny'd.

Ben. To David's envoy ?—
 This was a strain of insolence indeed !

Hufb. This sturdy opposition will be found
 Perhaps, the child of fear, a conscience gall'd
 With guilt, for if to rumour we may trust
 Under the shadow of a moonless night
 This great commander, like a felon, stole
 From his pavilion, and the trenches past.—

Ben. What proof of this, besides malignant fame ?

Hufb. His brother's doubled vigilance and care,
 His trumpet singly call'd the host to arms
 The absent General's part he well sustain'd
 From wing to wing he travers'd all the host
 And kindled up the slumb'ring war anew.

* Abnor, assassinated by Joab. See 2 Sam. c. iii. v. 20. 27.

Ben. Nor yet appear'd the Chief? and was it fear
Or sullen indignation that withheld
The General?

Husb. Time his purpose may disclose;
Meanwhile, conjecture dogs his lonely steps
Over the burning waste to Tadmor's bounds
Where those, whom late his lifted vengeance spar'd
On the dry skirts of Midian, wait the sign
To leave those wilds, where parching thirst abides
And settle on Samaria's water'd vales
Like locusts.—Others think his course is turn'd
Among the tribes of Israel to foment
Revolt and war.

Ben. To me, this enterprize
Seems foreign to his bent: is he a man
On bare suspicion to forsake his post?
Would he the rebels daring flag unfurl
And fling his fortune in the dubious scale
Of wild domestic rage, because her lord
Sent for a faithful servant from the camp?
It bears no semblance of his ancient art
He would not plunge himself in Jordan's flood
Because, in thought, he heard a lion roar?

Husb. Yes—he will plunge,—but like a water snake
Close vigilance must watch the passing stream
For none can tell to what unhappy shore
The monster first will point his crested head.
—All yet is dubious, but his flight!

Ben.

And we,

Shall we conceal those tidings from the King?

'Tis fit he knew the dangers full extent!

Hufb. Far, far beyond the limits of the camp

(If I conjecture right) the danger spreads

And much more near, than Tadmor's burning sands

Or even than Jordan's bounds!

Ben.

Too true: alas!

The democratic spirit spreads abroad,

Like a proud overpeering flood it sweeps,

And levels all distinction, scorns all rule,

As if the waves should lift their foamy heads

To dash their empress from her throne of light

Whose silver wand their mighty motion sways

Uriah's popularity and skill

Might fix the helm of empire in his hand,

And bid the menac'd barque out-ride the storm.

Hufb. Or, to surprize him with unwonted honours

Or profit by his counsel; David brings

At such a time, the * soldier from his post.—

But it were well if some experienc'd friend

Would meet the warrior, ere he sees the King

And hint some useful topics for the times

Such as the smooth-tongued courtier dreads to use

But which a soldier's candour might enforce

And amplify with fearless eloquence.

Ben.

Is he arriv'd?

* Viz. Uriah.

Husb.

A few short hours will see

The warrior here.

Ben.

These moments must be us'd

To counsel your brave friend, how best to serve

His country and his King—I go to find

That friend who in his inmost bosom lives

Who best can fire his zeal, or suage his flame.

[*Ex. severally.*]

S C E N E II.

An apartment in the Palace of the Queen.

THE QUEEN,* TIRZAH.

Tirz. O Princess! yet reflect! a husband's love
 By arts like those was never yet regain'd!
 Vengeance may quench the flame, if any spark
 Should yet survive, but ne'er can wake the fire
 In such a heart as his—recall thy words
 And bid thy messenger return! this hour,
 Perhaps this moment sees the spell begun
 That calls the fiends of discord from the deep
 And poisons homebred joy.

Queen.

Were I a slave

Call'd by th' inconstant smile of royalty

* Michal, the daughter of Saul.

For a few April days of transient love
 Like a fond flower to bask beneath the beam,
 Then hang my patient head, surcharg'd with dew
 And patient weep the sun's departing ray
 Thy lessons might have weight ! But I was born
 Of one, whose voice, by him that lords it now,
 Was dreaded worse than thunder ! when thou seest
 An eagle's airy breed the patient dove
 Then preach forbearance ! when thou seest the drops
 Of autumn wash away yon lofty frame
 That lifts its brow to Heaven, expect my tears
 Will melt a stubborn heart !

Tirz.

Nor prayers nor tears
 Would I advise, but patience, and the calm
 Of resignation, unassuming worth,
 Virtues, that speak by action, and confess
 That more than mortal guest that dwells within
 That soul-subduing grace, whose cherub smiles
 Can reach the heart, and bid revolting love
 Obsequious, own your sway,—forgive my zeal
 If my too liberal tongue offend ! but late
 You thought more calmly, and confess'd these arts
 Were not below your care, by arts like these
 (So well conceal'd, they seem'd no longer art)
 Not many moons ago you thought you saw
 His love returning.

Queen.

This augments my grief
 That then, from bloody wars but new return'd

When calm reflection brooded o'er the past,
 And brought again forgotten times to view
 My faithfulness and zeal, when for his life
 (Threaten'd by angry Saul, who sent his slaves
 With bloody purpose) * I expos'd my own,
 Sav'd him from slaughter, and a crown bestow'd——
 This he remember'd, and methought, I saw
 The tender lover o'er the king prevail,
 And halcyon days return ! when, like a blast
 That withers all the genial blooms of spring,
 This syren came, a suppliant, as it seem'd,
 Drest for persuasion, tho' in weeds of woe,
 In all the winning eloquence of tears
 Adorn'd. And with a pious charge, to gain
 A brother's pardon. So the rumour past,
 But all was fraudulent practice, all design'd
 To ruin my projected schemes, and lay
 My tow'ring edifice of hope in dust.—
 I will not bear it.—By the awful name
 Of him, whose blood I share, his ghost shall see
 Ample revenge for his insulted line !

Tirz. Oh yet reflect ! you draw a scene of guilt
 With Rumour's pencil, from imagin'd wrong !—
 Must Israel's sacred monarch be aspers'd
 Because Uriah left his blooming bride,
 And to th' inviting couch of love, prefer'd
 The warrior's lonely bed. He might have stay'd—

* 1 Sam. c. xii. v. 12.

No voice imperial call'd him to the field,
 Till the revolving moons had brought again
 His nuptial day*. His fellow-bridegrooms all
 Plead'd the law, nor for the martial trump
 Would change the hymeneal lyre. But he
 Disdain'd the flowery chaplet, and put on,
 With pride, the warrior's plume. His spouse's prayers,
 Her adjurations, and her trickling tears,
 That heighten'd every charm, unmov'd he bore,
 When honour call'd. And must we then conclude
 That fixt aversion in her bosom grew,
 Because her lord preferr'd his country's call
 Before ignoble ease? Such merit claim'd
 Encrease of love. And must Bathsheba stray
 Down that alluring path where pleasure leads,
 Because Uriah chose the rigid path
 Where honour marshalls on her hermit train?
 —Not such effects from such examples flow!—

Queen. The blessed sun that bids the flower expand,
 Matures the poisonous weed. And scorn with scorn,
 And hate with hate the female heart repays
 Oftner than tame servility, inspir'd
 By contumelious negligence and pride.
 Would heaven I could forget—but thy defence
 Brings to my mind the hateful circumstance

* New married men were excused from military service for the first year, by the Mosaic law.

Of their first meeting. * Then how David's heart
 Glow'd at her opening beauties, when he fought
 Her father's house, a refuge from the rage
 Of his pursuers! Hope inspir'd his vows—
 But when he learn'd Eliam's † solemn vow
 Had given her to Uriah, he resign'd
 His love to friendship: with dissembled virtue
 He gave her—but to make her more his own!

Tirz. Thus still suspicion clouds the noblest deeds,
 With her Tartarean shades! Let Reason speak,
 Reason will tell, that if she scorn'd her spouse,
 Who fought, at Honour's call, the bloody field.—
 She too must scorn that lover, who resign'd,
 At Friendship's voice her blooming virgin charms.—
 Reason will tell, that he, whose strenuous hand
 Could shut the pleasing image from his heart,
 At Friendship's call, would never wound the peace
 Of one, for whom he sacrificed his feelings!—
 O then my sovereign, hear thy servant's plea,
 Recall your mandate! trust not vague report,
 Nor be it ever said that she, who draws
 Her blood from Israel's first and mightiest king,
 Should seek the level of the slave, and mine
 Domestic peace! 'Tis nobler far to look
 Above such injuries! and leave to time

* At that time David had been deprived of his spouse by Saul.

† Father to Bathsheba.

To cure such casual wand'rings of the heart.
If he have stray'd!

Queen. Thinkst thou I would proceed such dreadful lengths,
Without the clearest proof?
Were it but casual, there indeed were hopes
Of speedy reformation. But I fear,
I fear! nay, I am certain. Years on years
Have seen their passion grow! It ne'er can be,
It gives the lie to reason, that a glance,
A casual look, tho' arm'd by Heaven or Hell,
With all their enginry, should fire the heart
At once. Of spells and magic I have heard,
But not believed. And there are men whose hearts
Yield at first onset. But, 'mongst such, the name
Of David numbers not.

Tirz. There must be charms
Of mind, as well as person, to secure
Lasting esteem; unhappy is that fair,
Who, trusting to th' enchantment of the eyes
Alone for conquest, when th' artillery fails,
Has no supply of mental charms within.
Hers is a short dominion!

Queen. To her charms
The fair adult'refs trusts not! There are powers
Whose strong assemblage keeps her in the throne
Of royal favour. And, should she be cast
Aside, the busy panders soon would find
Another in her room! By *her*, they rule;

She is their instrument to wind at will
 This royal engine to their sordid ends.
 And, does it not become my birth, my place,
 To scatter that obnoxious cloud, that damps
 The royal virtues ? Long the sacred lamp
 Of Judah has burn'd dim beneath the gloom,
 But soon it shall revive, and justice reach
 The trembling victim, tho' behind the throne.
 A loyal few, who lov'd my father's name
 (Trusty and bold, all friends of antique stamp,
 Who mourn my degradation feel the fall
 Of her, that added lustre to the name
 Of Bethlehem's haughty lord,) shall aid my views.
 To David's counsels they shall find their way,
 And force attention to the people's prayers.
 The house of Saul again shall lift its head
 In ancient splendour, on the blasted hopes
 Of those, who scoff her faded fortunes now. —
 But, see ! my faithful messenger returns ;
 His chearful looks proclaim the deed is done,
 And I shall rest in peace ! But thou retire.
 His message needs no witness.

Tirz.

Heaven forefend

Those evils, which my sad presaging soul
 Sees in approach, perhaps before the sun
 Descends ; for council now is all in vain.

[*Exit Tirzah.*

S C E N E III.

THE QUEEN—SHIMEI.

Queen. Thy countenance declares, before thy speech,
The success of thy message.

Shim. Yes, my queen!

The deadly vapours of illicit love
Have reign'd too long. But soon the wholesome gale
Of great revenge shall lift its awful voice,
And sweep from yon polluted palace walls
The noxious brood, that long in swarms besieg'd
Each avenue, and banish'd from its bounds
The sons of modest merit, ancient worth,
And lineal honour! Soon that upstart race,
With that perfidious, bloody man, who slew
Thy father's friend, shall lower their haughty crests.

Queen. Follow me to my chamber—there disclose
Thy tidings at full leisure, the loose tribe
Of profligates and panders soon shall find
Their empire at an end—convene your friends
But one by one, left over-curious eyes
Should mark their movements.

Shim. I but stay to meet
One of my confidential friends who waits

My coming at this instant, and the next
Shall see me, with the rest, attend thy will.

[Exit Queen.]

Shim. O sacred house of Benjamin! again
alone. Thou shalt resume the sceptre, or at least
Its lineal honours share.—Alas! with them
The old renown of Jacob sinks in night
Our glory is departed! Freedom fell
With thee, or what of freedom still remain'd
And bloody conquest now, and martial law
And costly pomp, by parasites ador'd
Succeed the rustic majesty of Saul
Who mingled with the people, nor disdain'd
To lead their legions, or in peace partake
Their humble joys—but see! my trusty friend
Approaches to my wish—Abdon—all hail.

SHIMEI—ABDON.

Shim. The moment comes, when they, who shed the blood
Of Abner, thy lamented friend shall pay
The fine of festal treason, and prepare
A banquet of revenge, that fiends might smile
To view!
Uriah comes, and in himself an host
Arm'd with his wrongs, he soon shall shake the walls
Of parasitic power! the kindred hosts
Of Ammon and of Tadmor thro' the tribes

That line yon courts, would scatter less dismay
If our designs succeed !

Abd.

Too well I know

Uriah's spirit—still untractable
And stern, he moulds his manners on the code
Of our republic : and her name adores
With true devotion : our neglected laws
He so reveres, that neither power, nor wealth
(Tho' next to regal honours on his brow
Were plac'd, with liberal hand) could bend his soul
To smother his revenge or let his wrath
Be satisfied with gentler penalty
Than what the law requires.

Shim.

And that is death

With propagated shame !

Abd.

And wouldst thou wish

That shame should reach to David ? could'st thou bear
To find the name of that heaven-favour'd man
Tainted with scandal's vile ignoble blot
An imputation, made by factious hands
Perhaps the fuel of the people's rage ?—

Shim.

Then is it as I fear'd—this interview

afide.

Was timely—but I must dissemble now
And wear the mask of loyalty !

To Abd.

My soul

Is seiz'd with horror at the thought !—But still
Some moderate method may be found, to steer
Between the wild extremes, the Sanhedrim

And popular delegates at Salem now
 Conven'd, thy art may sound—they all revere
 The patriot's name, and hate the haughty man
 Who leads our armies—and, for selfish ends
 Fires, with incessant schemes of foreign wars
 The royal mind, that he may hold the sword.—
His is the power—the *shadow* here remains
 Behind at Salem—should the general vote
 Prefer Uriah, (ere the husband knows
 His bed's abuse,) his wrongs perhaps might rest
 In long oblivion.—Bathsheba's return
 To welcome home her warrior, with the spell
 Of loyalty and wedded love at once,
 Might lull the whirlwind to a lasting calm.

Abd. Be it my business then to sound the tribes
 Perhaps the monarch, struck with deep remorse
 Nor less by merit won (by chance, or heaven
 Combin'd, at this fair crisis) may consent
 To crown the warrior, tho' he wrong'd the man
 And all at last be amity and peace. [Exit Abdon.

Shim. Go! loyal fool! and, like the sightless mole
 Mine for me! while the rude materials rais'd
 By thy blind industry, shall raise a pile
 Of finer masonry, exalted far
 Above the present fabric, which thy love
 So idolizes! this Jessean stem
 If Fate's mysterious volume right I read
 Shall know no second spring! He little dreams

I hate Uriah too ! vain-glorious man !
 He scorns the courtier, prizes honesty,
 And looks contemptuous on the lazy herd
 That bask at ease, beneath the royal beam
 At home, while he sustains the sultry noon
 And reaps an iron harvest—not aware
 That, bought and sold, the single-hearted slave
 Toils out his weary youth to feed our pride
 But we are grateful—witness he, who walks
 Thro' yonder shades in contemplation deep
 Fain would I listen—but his friend is near
 Achitophel, the partner of our hopes—
 He will discover all in proper time
 Nor at this crisis would I here be found !
[Exit Shimei.]

DAVID, (ACHITOPHEL—AT A DISTANCE.)

Yet, thanks to Heaven—some feelings are alive,
 The gangrene has not spread o'er all my soul !
 I am not quite embruted, quite debas'd
 Below th' inferior orders, whose prone looks
 Contemplate earth, for I can view yon sun,
 And all the dread magnificence of heaven
 With looks erect ; but not of filial awe.—
 It flashes terror on me ! When it frowns
 I feel a night within, Cimmerian gloom
 In double pomp of horror ! When it smiles,

The opening scenes of yon proud theatre
 Display that ample range, where late my muse
 Wing'd her proud way exulting. Now, alas!
 Drooping she sits, with moulted plumes, below,
 And scarcely seems to wonder at her fall!
 Yet more than all those elements combin'd
 In dread explosion bursting on my head,
 I fear the looks of that much injur'd man,
 Injur'd beyond repair, beyond the wealth
 Of Egypt to repay. I sent for him—
 And yet I seem his coming steps to feel
 Weighty as lead upon my sinking heart.—
 Yet such a chaos domineers within
 That I scarce know the motive of those throbs
 That rend my heart-strings. Whether keen remorse,
 Or dread of heaven, or that antipathy
 That rival feels for rival in his love—
 And now he comes,—and in her burning cheek
 And in her alienated eye confus'd
 He soon will see that sacred spark of love
 Quite gone, that us'd to welcome his return,
 Bath'd in the honest twinkling tear of joy!
 This soon he must perceive, or he has lost
 That piercing sense for which I lov'd him once—
 And must I see him too? I sent for him—
 And must I shrink beneath my servant's eye
 Debas'd, a crouching slave, before a slave?
 It is but justice.—He, that fear'd not heaven

Should tremble at his fellow dust !—The man
 Whose coward conscience tells him he has sinn'd
 Flies, when no foe pursueth. Time has been
 When I was lion-hearted, but, alas !
 I then was righteous—I can trace the steps
 That led from guilt to guilt, a downward way
 But to revisit light, and mount again,
 Appears a task, beyond the strength of man ;
 And who shall raise me from the murky den
 Which I myself have dug ? Shalt thou ?

[Seeing Achitophel.

From thee,

And thy pernicious counsels, I derive
 The ruin of my peace.

Ach. My sovereign lord,
 My faithful counsels —

David. — Fed my passions high.
 'Twas thou inflam'd my pride, and woke the war
 With Ammon *, for a slight affront, a wrong
 Which wisdom would have smil'd at. Thou advis'd
 To leave the toils and hazard of the war
 To Joab, and rest at home, lull'd by the sound
 And distant din of arms. * A stripling's scorn
 Must be repaid with blood, while sloth at home
 Fosters worse passions. Had I brav'd the field,
 And cop'd alone with unbelieving foes,

* Viz. The treatment of his Ambassadors by Hanun, son to the King
 of Ammon. 2 Sam. 10.

Cas'd in bright arms, beneath the beam of noon,
My worst foe had not found me !

Ach.

Witness Heaven !

Witness my honour unimpeach'd ! no views
But for thy sacred safety sway'd my voice
To counsel thy delay !

David.

O blessed times,

Tho' deem'd afflictive, when, from hill to hill
I fled the royal blood-hounds ! *Them* I thought
My only foes, my only trust was Heaven !
His favour to obtain, my vigilance
And caution still with keen, observant eye,
Guarded against the taint of every vice,
I saw but *one* protector, but *one* way
To gain his favour. Every morning shone
On some new miracle. Some wond'rous scene
Of prompt deliverance.

Ach.

Let my sovereign lord

Not forfeit his dependance. On despair
Heaven frowns, and hates the soul that doubts his love.

David. His love !—Too much I trusted in his love !

Abus'd his mercy and his power defy'd,
But now, alas, I dread the eye of man:
My heart is bare and bleeding—every glance
Sends a shaft thro' it—tho' but late it seem'd
Enclos'd in steel. Say, is Uriah come ?
And is there hope to veil the glaring shame
From every eye, but Heaven's—for man to man

Is an inhuman judge, and I have foes
That soon would dog my name, and hunt it down
Thro' every maze of endless infamy !

Ach. Uriah is return'd.

David. And wherefore yet
Has he not claim'd an audience ? Tho' I dread
To see him, yet his absence wounds me more.
I know not what to wish, or to enquire
Has he vouchsaf'd a visit yet at home ?—
Or has allegiance vanquish'd love, and sent
The gallant, injur'd warrior, first to pay
His duty to his king ?

Ach. At your command
His motions all are spy'd.

David. And what result ?
Torture me not with doubt ; nor, on your life
Dare to conceal the worst !

Ach. Compell'd, adjur'd,
My loyalty commands, what love would hide.
Ere those you sent had met him on the way,
Who meant, beneath some seeming fair pretext
To tend his footsteps till they lodg'd him safe
Left any foul report, or dark surmise
Should taint his eyes, or ears—he was observ'd
In close and serious conference with Shimei.—

David. Then all is public—that curst Benjamite
(Sworn foe to me and mine) has told the tale
Whate'er he knew, and what he knew not, feign'd

Disloyal, tardy slaves ! whose task it was
 To meet him first, and keep his mind serene
 From each contagious rumour ! all is lost !
 Has he yet reach'd his home, or have you learn'd
 Of his reception there ?

Ach. I had not means.—

David. How seem'd he on his coming to the palace ?

I know his open nature, far above
 Dissembling, or the usual craft of courts
 Whate'er he feels, his feelings he proclaims,
 Each look and gesture shows his inmost soul—
 Oh ! could I read his looks !—but mine would show
 What most I want to hide !

Ach. He will not brook

(Proud, and a soldier as he is) to tell
 Whate'er he knows to all, if aught he knows —

David. If aught he knows !—where'er the serpents fang

Was fixt, the poison rankles in the wound—
 And Shimei's love to me I long have known !—
 That Benjamite by every art has try'd
 To taint my purest actions with the stain
 Of some malignant view, and put the mask
 Of malice, even on innocence—oh then
 What horrid vizors for deformity ?—
 It needs none, for the slightest hint of truth
 Is foul enough !

Ach. Yet Shimei scarce would dare
 To give his venom breath—for, well I know

The coward tongue would falter in his fears
 He is not one whom noble Natures soon
 Would condescend to trust!—there is between
 His nature, and Uriah's such repulse
 Such fierce antipathy as ne'er would blend
 Their jarring natures in one common view
 Or common trust.—

David. Go find him, and explore
 His spirit, while I study to receive him.

[*Ex. severally.*]

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II. SCENE I

An open Space before the Palace of David.

URIAH.

Would I had fallen in battle! all the rage
 Of onset, siege, and storm, is balmy peace
 To what I feel within!—I thought thee false
 O Shimei—and Bathsheba, truth itself!—
 What baneful art has ruin'd thee and me!—
 For thou must fall—if justice yet is left
 In Israel, nor will I thy doom survive
 To linger out in shame a hated life

The mark of public scorn ! a man, who prest
 Still foremost in the paths of honest fame !
 Yes ! justice shall be done ! for David lives
 David, whose life by these heaven-favour'd hands
 Of old was sav'd.—'Tis he will right my wrongs
 And he will greatly vindicate my fame
 (For that calumnious tale, with mystic art
 Hinted by that vile Benjamite, I scorn
 To think of it ! and would to heaven, the rest
 Were false alike !—) but I have seen too much
 Her looks, her words confirm'd it ! but an hour
 Of calm deliberate scrutiny will come !
 To search the maze of deep iniquity—
 And then,—for vengeance ! vengeance !—To the King
 My duty first I'll pay, (as he requires)
 And paint the glorious progress of his arms !
 'Tis needful soon, lest frenzy, or despair
 Should seize my faculties ere I fulfill
 A loyal soldier's and an envoy's due.

TO HIM, ADRIEL.

Uri. Welcome, my friend ! But what dost thou behold
 In me, to touch your features with concern
 So ill disguis'd, and deep, as what I see
 In every line of that once chearful face ?
 Before we met you seem'd to turn away
 And hide a burning blush ! Was it for me,

You blush'd, my friend ? Was it for me that tear
 Stole down your glowing cheek ? Have I behav'd
 Or, as a soldier, or a friend, to bring
 Shame on my friends ? Uriah knows no guilt,
 No soldier's stain, nor will he hang the head
 For others folly. Come, my friend, I know
 My wife is false !

Adr. The tongue of calumny
 That oft envenoms virtue, *here*, perhaps,
 Has stain'd the stainless !

Uri. Be it so, my friend ;
 Then I will search the slander to the source,
 And be it distant, as the springs of Nile,
 Or high as Sinai's thund'ring tops ; the power
 That spoke his mandates thence, shall see this arm
 Assert his sacred law, by Israel heard,
Thou shalt not bear false witness.

Adr. Well resolv'd !

Uri. Ah, were that all, my friend ! But much I fear,
 The foul contagious air of courts has breath'd
 Infection thro' my dwelling ; how, or whence
 It came, I know not. But the plague has spread !
 It has possess'd her blood ! Her mantling cheek
 And trembling eyes confess'd it ; too serene
 Was once that heavenly aspect, not to show
 The smallest vapour which disturbs the peace
 That dwelt within, for many a tranquil day,
 In better times ! Now, all is dark and deep,

Tho' drefs'd in borrow'd smiles ! She scarce had breath
 To speak my welcome—cold to my embrace,
 I felt not there that throbbing heart that us'd
 To beat in unison with mine !

Adr.

Perhaps,

The scandalous tale has reach'd her ears, and she
 Is apprehensive that thine ear has drunk
 The deadly poison, and thy rage believ'd
 The foul, calumnious tale. This thought might wound
 The purest bosom, and induce a tinge
 On the most innocent cheek, to look like guilt.—
 Your visit was but short ! Suspend your judgment
 'Till but to-morrow's dawn arrive. This night
 May bring conviction !

Uri.

What ! this night ! this night

Am I to sleep, and will some angel come
 To tell me in a dream my spouse is true ?—
 Or must I, lull'd by charms to soft repose,
 Perhaps, within a practis'd harlot's lap,
 Help out her soft assertion of her truth
 With all a husband's fond credulity ?
 No—by my father's shade ! By all the tombs
 Of all that line, whose honourable dust
 No stain like this has tarnish'd, I will tear
 The mantle from this mystery, ere I sleep,
 Or never sleep again !

Adr.

Say, wouldst thou watch

Her door, or lie in ambuscade at home ?

This wild demeanour, if she still is pure,
 She soon would know, then hate, and deadly scorn
 Would pay your ill-starr'd pains !

Uri. And must I doubt
 For ever ? Have I neither friend nor foe
 To end my vain suspense at once ?

Adr. This night,
 If thou regardst my counsel. Shun thy house,
 And lodge with me !

Uri. I know thou art my friend,
 And yet thy softest implication sounds
 Like thunder ! What sad change, or deadly form
 Of danger, lurks at home ? Or must I give
 My room to others ! Say, what blasting power
 Of earth or hell shall cross a husband's steps
 That goes to visit home ?

Adr. Mistake me not.
 You torture every word to guilty meaning,
 To images of shame and turpitude,
 Which on the canvass of the passing clouds,
 Your sick'ning fancy draws ! I meant no guilt,
 Or danger in thy parting or thy stay !

Uri. Long since, we have exchange'd our souls ! our love
 Surpass'd a female's fondness : can I think
 You treat me like a froward child ! to lull
 My sense of honour by a drowsy charm
 To bid me sit down calmly with my wrongs
 And wink at broad detection ? Tell me, friend,

Does this become a foldier and a man
Not loweft in eftcem ?

Adr. To that high point
I wifh to raife thee, which thy merit claims
Where worth like thine will meet its due reward ;
Thy country calls thee !—To Uriah's name
The public chorus chants her sweeteft praife,
Mixt with indignant murmurs ; when it fees
Thy merit funk, beneath its pitch fo far
Subordinate to fawning flaves, whose tongues
By licking up imperial duft, have cleans'd
Their way to wreaths for which they never bled !—

Uri. Where wouldft thou lead me ? thro' what mighty breach
Of loyalty and law conduct my fteps
In vanity's broad mirrour to behold
My puny fhadow ftretch'd to giant fize,
And menacing the moon—I am not craz'd
Nor (tho afflicted deep) can yet miftake
The moody madnefs of a moon-ftruck brain
For fober reafon.—Adriel ! I perceive
Your friendly purpofe, in my private wounds
To pour the foothing balm of public love—
And lead me gently from the precipice
Where reafon's felf grows giddy !—but once more
Why leave my home to-night ?—

Adr. Because a prize
Worthy a foldier may this night be won
A game, to fave a kingdom ! far beyond

The chace of idle rumours ! meanwhile, tell
 Does your proud general keep his old esteem
 Among his bands ? Say, has he learn'd of late
 To triumph over hearts, no more content
 With humble looks alone ?—

Uri. Neither time
 Nor place accords with such a question now ;—
 This, of my general ask'd—my ready sword
 Had to another's inquisition given
 A suitable reply !

Adr. Reply to me
 Not as a soldier, but a trusty friend
 That knows to whom he speaks, and therefore dares
 No calumny exists in private words
 No faithful bosoms trusted.

Uri. True, if nought
 Invidious, or detracting, from my words,
 Calumnious art, against the great in name
 Or office, may derive : that vapour draws
 Her poison, from the most innoxious flowers
 That e'er perfum'd the gale !

Adr. Art thou become
 That honest, loyal bigot of the camp
 That does his duty boldly, and winks hard,
 (Whene'er his general bids him face the foe)
 And sees no danger ?—Hast thou sunk so far
 The citizen of Israel in the soldier
 As not to see and feel th' enormous load

Our martial honours lay upon our necks ?—
 How gaudy does the cause of glory seem
 Like meteors, streaming thro' the waste of night !
 Like them, it waves sublime, to witch the world
 With gaudy draperies ; but, like them, portends
 The founding hurricane, that sweeps away
 At once, the ripen'd harvest and the swain.—
 'Twas thus you thought, ere war became a trade
 When the bold peasant flung away his goad
 And seiz'd his javelin at his country's call —
 Then hung his shield aloft and join'd the plough.
 But, now, in endless wars on wars engag'd
 Where veterans, grown beneath their helmets gray
 Forget they have a country you have learn'd
 The dialect in vogue, and spurn the swain
 Who groans beneath the burden of your wars
 If his too liberal tongue but glance a hint
 Against th' imperial politics, that teach
 Unbounded conquest, and unbounded sway !

Uri. You wrong me much, my friend ! there is no heart
 In all Judæas bands, which throbb's more quick
 At freedom's call, than mine ! or more regrets
 The time, when our victorious flag (which now
 Hangs like a meteor, o'er the troubled east
 Portending ruin) more benignly shone
 Like Phosphor, o'er those native hills, a sign
 Of gentle peace, to all but Israel's foes
 Invading foes—but now, we seek them far

From home—and seem to love the cruel trade
Even for itself!

Adr. Believe me, friend! there lies
Beneath the splendid pile of trophied arms
A deep abyfs of ruin for the state! —
Ambitious views, and overweening thoughts
Ideal crowns, and sceptres in the grasp
Already lead our leader, we pursue
And ask not why, nor whither.

Uri. Such designs
In other minds at other times may grow—
But our commander ne'er will bribe his host
Such dangerous lengths!

Adr. Thro' want of power—perhaps
I doubt his self-denial.

Uri. Be th' effect
From this, or from whatever cause deriv'd
His honours on his loyalty recline
And *that* reposes singly on the name
Of David.

Adr. You already have return'd
All unawares, the answer I desired
And clear'd my doubts, then from *himself* he holds
No claim to general love; has he no arts
Of popularity?

Uri. His arts are vain
Since his ill-omen'd hand in Abner's blood
Was dy'd, tho' bold in arms, in counsel wise

Tho' with the semblance of paternal love
 He courts his gallant bands; their hearts revolt.
 Tho' by their King's command, their hands are his.
 His perfidy to Saul's lamented friend
 So taint his every deed, his every look,
 His words seem fawning, and his liberal gift
 The purchase of sedition—that foul deed
 Attaints the general, and degrades the man.

Adr. On kingly favour then he rests alone!—
 Say, should the rays of royal grace illumine
 Some hero in eclipse, and point their rays
 Full on another head, would Israel's bands
 Approve the monarch's choice?

Uri. I question that,—
 His * brother still, with honest martial worth
 Of half the popular indignation, robs
 The general's name, obnoxious tho' it be—
 Another choice might sow dissension's rage
 Among the troops.

Adr. But Israel's choice at home
 The sanction of the tribes, the senate's voice
 Would, like the word, that bids the troubled deep
 Compose her tumult, send a sacred calm
 Among the hosts of Jacob.

Uri. The intent
 Of your discourse, I know not—if to soothe
 My grief, you miss the means! while thus you gall

* Abishai.

My fore impatience — Was I sent for home
 To vent at large my unavailing sighs
 For undeserved shame, or lend my breath
 To faction's aims !

Adr. And art thou yet, to learn
 The general discontent, that spreads around
 From tribe to tribe, and what the delegates
 Intend, this moment in full counsel me, —
 An awful confistory ? thou shalt know
 Their purpose soon, and you, perhaps, may hear
 Uriah's name the master-note that fills,
 The awful harmony of popular claims.

Uri. Uriah's name !

Adr. No longer will they bear
 Oppression's iron rod, nor brook the sway
 Of those confederates, who have rul'd the state
 So long at random ; now a single word,
 Perhaps, will break the charm !

Uri. And were my name
 That of the luckiest rebel, who dissolv'd
 The bonds of loyalty, and blew the storm
 From mutiny to madness, 'till the crown,
 Purchas'd by blood, adorn'd the villain's brow.
 Sooner upon the footstool of the throne
 My blood should flow in royalty's defence,
 Than this right hand should break the hallow'd bounds
 That lets in loud misrule to lord it wide

O'er sacred order and imperial sway.—

Even gratitude, and friendship's ties forbid.—

I love my king, his virtues well I know,

To them I trust in time to break the cloud,

And chase the noxious fogs that hide his beams.

Adr. You wrong my meaning much, if you surmise

I wish to tempt you from your loyalty—

I rather hope that some high office waits

Your coming, either in the court or camp,

To serve thy king, and Israel's state at once ;

Some station, whence your eye, like yonder beam,

May pierce corruption's haunts, and bid it die,

And wither up the foul and noxious stems

Of luxury and vice, where'er they spring.—

This David owes thee, and I trust, he means

The retribution now, for much it taints

His fame, to leave his long-try'd friend obscure,

(Altho' his worth compells a nation's praise)

Like day's bright lamp, which, tho' beneath the deep,

Yet wakes the warbling lark's instinctive song.—

Shouldst thou succeed, the choice would soon dispell

All discontent, and lay the rising storm.—

If he neglect thee, and continue still

His favour to that dark society

That fill the court and camp, would'st thou refuse

A hand to help to save a sinking state,

When Israel claims thine aid ?

Uri.

I see not yet

The pressing need to leave the beaten track
Of loyalty.

Adr. And may it never come !
Yet time, my friend, may soon discover more !
Then, if thy country calls, attend the call,
Nor fear to spread thy pinions to the gale,
Mount to an eagle's pitch, and boldly soar
Against the sun, if fate demands thy rise !
Think on thy wrongs, if any faults be found
Where most thou fear'st. Remember Israel's claim—
And, when I see thee next, be resolute,
Be fearless, as becomes thy country's friend,
Be bold, be cautious, and avoid thy home.

[*Exit* Adriel.]

Uri. Was it a demon in a friendly form
That came to tempt me thus !—I yet am firm—
The noxious spell has neither touch'd my head
Nor heart. I feel the seat of reason clear—
What am I then to think, or what resolve.
Think on my wrongs. Why, then, my shame is known.
Yon travel'd sun but propagates the tale
From east to west ! Yet I must shun my home !
Or glares the proof abroad ?—perhaps—at court.
Or from the court my shame at first began.
For we, that fight the battles of our king,
And bear the vengeance of our God against
Rebellious states, and purge the noxious clime,
Yet know not what pollution breeds at home,

Or what foul vapours taint the stagnant calm
 Of high-vic'd cities. Some new favourite
 Of this new faction, that besiege the throne
 Of too indulgent David, has undone
 My peace for ever ; yet, whoe'er he is,
 My friend even dreads to name him. Should it be
 * Amnon, or Absalom, my sovereign lord
 Will not, like old lethargic Eli, spare
 The criminal, for his exalted rank,
 Or royalty of blood. Yet why my friend
 Should warn me thus to keep aloof. Some spell
 Or danger lurks within. I have it ! Fiends !
 The veil is drawn at last ! O stupid, numb'd
 To sense ! O for a long and quiet sleep !
 Unvisited by dreams !
 O for the wings of eagles to escape
 This odious scene, and the detested truth
 That rushes on my sense—pursues my steps
 With harpy stings. Madness were ease to this !
 I then was call'd for home, to cloak her shame.—
 The foul adult'refs ! lest the swelling crime
 Should force discovery 'ere the camp allows
 A regular return. Oh, Adriel,
 Would thou hadst kept the secret ! Yet I thank thee—
 Thank thee—for frenzy—madness. Yet I'm calm !
 I will collect myself ! Ah now I know,

Too well I know thy kind assiduous care,
 To lure me from the soul-corroding scene
 To fairy strains of popular applause!—
 Yet I will keep my post—besiege the court
 Till day succeeds to night, and night to day.
 Well am I us'd to watching, care and toil,
 In Israel's cause; and in my sov'reign's ear,
 Even in his dreams, I'll hollow for revenge;
 And, if I fail, I'll find the way to reach
 The nearest to the throne, or shake the seat
 Of royalty itself with my appeal. [Exit Uriah.

Scene changes to an inner Apartment of the Palace.

DAVID.

How all things change, thro' the dark medium seen
 Of self-abhorrence, and the gloom of sin!
 Yon sun that us'd to lift my mental view
 Thro' boundless journies, till his lamp was lost
 On the pure limits of eternal day,
 Seems but a flickering taper now, that leads
 To the licentious bower. Yon quiet groves,
 Where, when the day-star, (sunk beneath the deep)
 Call'd in his wand'ring glories, when forlorn
 The widow'd evening flung her gaudy robes
 Aside, and walk'd the woods in graver state,
 Sedate and slow; when each dim alley seem'd

To fluctuate with aerial shapes, that mov'd
 Celestial measures to the soothing swell
 Of the soft breeze, which, thro' the lofty sweep
 Of the green theatre, alternate rose,
 Alternate sunk, and varied with soft touch
 The waving scenery of the pendent gloom !
 How did the movements of my soul accord
 With the grave minstrel's ! But now, these woods
 Put on the pomp of Hades. Whispering fiends
 Mock the sweet woodland echoes, till they seem
 To sicken at their breath ! They line my walks,
 Marshall my lonely steps, and, thro' the air,
 Hurl their dark spells that check the mounting thought,
 And tame the soaring soul to base pursuits,
 Like the sad bird that skims the mantled pool
 When humid vapours clog his weary wings.

TO HIM, ONIAH.

Why seek this secret place to tell your tale,
 Is it too dreadful for all ears but mine ?
 Be not dismay'd, but give your message breath ;
 I who have wander'd desarts, by distrust
 Attended, and with danger at my heels,
 Have not so far forgot my former toils
 But I can bravely meet whatever doom
 Heaven may intend !

Aside.

Oh ill-supported boast !

Guilt has unedg'd my firmest, best resolves,
And stolen the hero's temper from my soul !

Oniah. Pardon, my lord, and, if my tongue offends,
Think it an organ, by the powers above,
Reluctant, in an odious task employ'd !

David. Whate'er it be, with confidence declare
Thy message ; I must learn to bear the worst.
What has been, has been, nor can fate recall
The deeds of yesterday, the deep remorse
Of years to come !

Oniah. Whatever is to come,
Heaven tells not. All her oracles are dumb
To thy enquiries.

David. In the people's voice,
Perhaps, it speaks too plain ! That awful organ
Is often touch'd by Heaven. Did Zadok give
No answer ?

Oniah. What he said, I shall report
Most truly—when I pray'd him to apply
For counsel to th' eternal majesty
That dwells between the cherubim—*I dare not,*
Was his abrupt reply. “ I saw last night
“ An awful vision sent from him, who lives
“ For ever. In the holiest place of all
“ Methought I stood, and saw the heaven's lamp
“ Burn ominously dim, all mute and sad
“ Seem'd the attendant choir, the warbled hymn
“ Paus'd on a sudden, and their startled looks

" Were all bent upward, with expectance dread
 " Of some descending terror from above
 " Clad in empyreal glory ; when anon
 " Like light'ning it appear'd, and quick was gone—
 " And all was desolate and dark, forlorn
 " And silent ; but the flash forerun the storm
 " Soon rose below a tempest of misrule
 " And various clamour, like the winds of Heaven
 " That hush th' insurgent waves,—the dread result
 " To me is all unknown, nor Heaven vouchsafes
 " By oracle or Urim to unfold
 " His will at large."

David.

I only wish'd to know

If by th' expulsion of a man, involv'd
 In tenfold guilt, I might, in part, appease
 Heaven's anger, which against me seems to burn !
 This is denied—and yet—the voice within
 Tells what the vision meant, too plain—but still
 The sanction of the prophet was requir'd—
 —Was Nathan found at last ?

Oniah.

Long was the search

And hopeless, till at last we trac'd him on
 To Moreh's hill ; with hasty march he strode
 To the tall summit, which o'erlooks the vale
 Of Hinnom, where the dark flood finds below
 His gulfy way, then looking back, he cast
 An angry glance, " Yon city soon shall pour
 " Her worst abominations forth in vain—

" Other abominations shall succeed !"

" Loud in the breeze I hear the birds of prey

" I see them hover o'er yon hated roof

" Then westward wing their way, till Ephraim's wood

" Presents an unexpected feast," no more

He deign'd, but plung'd amid the forest gloom

Inscrutable to eyes profane, where still

He shuns all human converse.

David Retire, but within call—celestial light !

to
Oniah, Yet thou wilt deign some dubious rays, before
who Thou set'st for ever !

retires. A welcome radiance, waning tho' it be
And dim ! I will not lose the sacred glimpse
But now begin my long-neglected task
Tho' late, yet not unconquerably hard
And labour in the twilight—first I'll chase
This man of blood from Israel—that when time
Allows—and to my injur'd friend repay
In gifts and honour, what by me he lost
If they can pay such wrongs as his.

To Dispatch
Oniah. And call the delegates of Israel—now
Their king expects them and attends their claims.

End of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.—S C E N E I.

A Court before the Palace of David.

ENTER JOAB DISGUISED.

What do I see and hear? I left one siege
 It seems, to stand another! Rabbah's streets
 Were I this moment hem'd by hostile spears
 Were not more dangerous to my hunted life
 Than Salem's sacred squares.—I heard my name
 In execrations sent from lip to lip
 As if it breath'd infection! I would find
 As many hands to end my hated life
 As if the sons of Ammon dog'd my heels
 Were I but known among them! soon I'll learn
 The drift of this commotion, and, perhaps
 Discharge it on my foes.—'Tis true, the people
 Have been aggriev'd, and, should their curses light
 As they are meant, there lives not one whose life
 Is more obnoxious! But I much admire
 Why David hides his head, and lets the storm
 Roll on resistless, like th' unbridled winds!
 Great was his ancient influence—great the love

His people bore him, else my blood, long since,
 Had paid the public hatred, but I hung
 On him, like clasping ivy on the oak,
 And while the vigorous root supply'd his stem,
 My branches flourish'd green. But who are these,
 Who toward the palace move in solemn pomp?—
 By all my fears, the delegates of Israel.
 What can it mean? I'll mingle with the crowd,
 And learn their destination! Could I trust
 The rumour of the day, they threaten *me*!
 I'll follow with the stream, but find, perhaps,
 A way at length to fix a lasting mound
 Before the fury of the people's power.

AMOZ, HELKIAH, WITH THE OTHER DELEGATES OF THE PEOPLE,
 APPROACH THE PALACE.

TO THEM, ACHITOPHEL.

The king has sent me—(so I must pretend)—[*Aside*].
 From you to learn the purport of your claims,
 Ye might have staid, till from the conquer'd foe,
 Our general came triumphant, and laid down
 His crested pride, to join in sage debate.
 We then confirm your laws.

Hilk.

The general's voice

Is futile here; in his own cause, no man
 Is judge and advocate! The law we come
 Now to propose regards himself the first.

Ach. If it be wrong to judge the meanest man
Unheard, and unimpeach'd, then judge not him !

Hilk. On him we lay no blame ; nor derogate
From his illustrious rank, and kindred ties
To Jesse's royal stem ; but this, (with him)
Respects a public cause !

Ach. Declare your grievance.

Hilk. It has been oft declar'd, but still in vain.
But pent up waters, though deep mounds oppose,
Will find their way at last. It is more fit
To form a regular channel for its rage,
Than to confine its fury, lest it rise
In dread rebellion, and convulse the globe.—
Why does the flower of Israel waste its prime
In foreign fields, while years on years revolve,
And sees our bounds extend, our people fade.
The soldier's glossy raven locks assume
The grisly hue, beneath the batter'd helm.
At home the hind out-toils the travel'd sun,
And sees the harvest of his labour, swept
Away, to feed the famine of the war.
And, worse (if worse can be) to waste at home
The soul infections of an haughty court !

Ach. Whence this new insolence ?

Hilk. Achitophel,
You much mistake, or wilfully misname
Our privilege ; this insolence is old,
Old as the days of Aaron. Then the voice

Of the assembled tribes was law and truth,
 Tho' now it sounds in some fastidious ears
 Like treason !

Ach. What you gave, ye would resume.
 When, all unable to defend yourselves
 Against the numerous foes, that hem'd you round
 On every hand, and held in manacles
 Your martial ardour ; then you claim'd a king
 (Such as the nations boast) to lead you on
 To conquest and to glory, now, averse
 To your own choice (a choice confirm'd above)
 Ye would undo your work, and grudge to bear
 That easy load ye laid upon yourselves.
 But this, were this allow'd, by sudden change
 Would quite unhinge all government, and break
 The settled course of things ; as if the moon
 Of bleak December should assert her right
 O'er July's sultry calm, and freeze *his* dews
 In her cold crystal urn.

Amor. Those arguments
 Your royal master needs not to support
 His state, for in his subjects hearts he reigns :
 Nor needs the claims of tyranny, to guard
 His firm, establish'd throne ; it is to give
 His power a better basis we propose
 These laws. Our loyal meaning is to give
 Our King a surer title to our loves,
 And counsel him to trust his sacred cause

To those we can confide in. This we claim—
 We wish to see old Judah's line restor'd
 To its first honours, and we must have way.—

Ach. Ye know not whom ye toil for, if ye did
 Ye were more culpable, but now, no more
 Ye know the hand that turns your headlong rage
 To his own factious purpose, than the mass
 Which from its flaming gorge the mountain flings
 Knows, why it falls in ruin on the swains
 And lays their harvest low!

Hil. We need not blush
 To name the man, whose virtues long have won
 A nation's confidence, and given them trust
 In all his days to come!

Ach. Produce the man
 Whose merit soars above the common pitch
 Of statesmen and of heroes!

Amos. Who can doubt
 The man, or who has borne so mean a lot
 In Israel's tribes, as never to have heard
 Uriah's name?

Ach. His virtues are allow'd
 By all, nor can that age be quite corrupt
 When such men are esteem'd! But should the King
 Allow such ready monitors at will
 To win their way by clamour, and besiege
 His throne, on every petty discontent
 What would become of majesty and awe

What would become of Israel, still the prey
 Of every popular gust? yet mean I not
 To slight your grave proposal, when I find
 The sanction of the senate join your claims,
 But these are sudden measures and require
 Deliberation. To degrade the man
 Whom years have crown'd with glory, seems a step
 That leads to danger.

Amoz. For ourselves, we scorn
 The danger, and we know the general host
 Abhors their leader's view; nor aught supports
 Obedience in the camp but David's name
 Remove that column, and the general sinks
 With all his martial fame.

Acb. Of this I own
 Some symptoms have appear'd, the people's voice
 Demands respect—but, for this day, the King
 Requests a respite, till to-morrow's dawn
 Matures his counsels, some domestic cares
 At present have engross'd the royal mind
 To these he dedicates his present hours!
 To-morrow is the peoples!

[After a short conference with the rest.]

Amoz. We depend
 Upon his wisdom, and with joint assent
 Postpone our message, till he claims our presence
[Exeunt Delegates.]

Ach. The man who watches not the turning tide
 Nor weighs his anchor, when the current serves
 Must leave his vessel stranded on the beach
 And mourn the moments lost ! I did not rise
 To this uncertain height to stem the blast
 Of popular favour. He, that holds the helm
 Of state should learn to veer with every wind
 And have a harbour still secure and safe
 On whatsoever coast the shifting gale
 Blows from all quarters under heaven — I saw
 This tempest in the cradle, nor despis'd
 Its infant frowns, nor, when it grew at last
 To giant size, it found me unprepar'd
 To ride the wild waves in my steady barque !—
 Let Joab and them, who scorn'd to shun the flaw
 Beneath its fury sink !—for me, I scorn
 To share the sounding fall of wilful men.—
 Another crew may man the toiling ship
 Tho', by themselves undone, the mariners
 Were all swept overboard. Uriah then
 Is Israel's favourite, and too well I know
 The guilty reason why the conscious King
 Would wish to raise him !—He has one way left
 To calm the people's and the husband's rage
 At once ; I see the former chief's decline
 And this new favourite's rise—whate'er I owe
 The general, to myself a larger debt
 Is due, nor will I break the ancient law

Of self-defence, to aid a desperate cause—

But who comes here? —

ENTER A MESSENGER.

Mess. My lord! a stranger sues
For audience.

Ach. Let him come

Mess. He shuns the view
Of public eyes.

Ach. Let him declare to you
His business.

Mess. He refuses to disclose
To any ear but yours', whate'er he claims!

Ach. What means this mystic semblance? does he seem
A foreigner or native, one of rank
Plebeian, or above the common herd?

Mess. His habit speaks the soldier! but he seems
A man, that on himself alone depends
Scorning the sun-shine and the storms of life
Not us'd to tremble at a despot's nod
But daring to confront him; as the time
And his disguise allow'd me, in his mein
And port, I this could learn.

Ach. I hazard not
An interview with strangers—I have foes
That seek my life! before I see this man
He must with cautious hand be scrutiniz'd
For private arms.

Mess. Already that is done

He of himself unfolded all his robe
And bade me search him round !

Ach. Then let him wait
My coming at the secret place of audience.

Scene changes to a Closet in the Palace.

ACHITOPHEL, A STRANGER.

Ach. What is your business, that in secret thus
You wish to have transacted here ?—my time
Incessantly employ'd in public cares
No trivial interruption needs. [*Joab discovering himself.*

Amazement !

The general in the palace !

Joab. Yes—I watch
While you securely sleep, nor seem to mind
The pent-up storm that seems to rage beneath
And threats to blow you to the moon ! for me
I heard its voice afar, I mark'd its rage
Even from the camp, till under Salem's towers
It threatens dread explosion !

Ach. For what end
I know not, but for some important end
The noble chief forsakes his watchful post
By Rabbah's towers, in those more dangerous walls
To face his unseen foes, that brew a storm
Which menaces more near.

Joab.

Ideal horrors

Of popular commotion ! Let it rage
 I've weather'd many worse ! but this appears
 A reptile, noxious vapour, carrying plagues
 Deep in its bosom, which it sows around
 And drizzles death, where'er it sweeps along,
 Already has it poison'd half the camp
 And now it sails away, and threatens the city.

Ach. Be calmer ! and by certain signs describe
 Your secret foe.

Joab.

His name at once declar'd

Discovers all—Uriah.

Ach.

Whence your dread

Of him ?

Joab.

Are you to learn his guileful arts

His serpent fraud, that hisses as it stings
 His whisper'd faction thro' the tribes of Israel—
 It must be he—for since he join'd our bands
 They hate the track of glory, and begin
 To sigh for home—there was a time, of late
 When honour was a soldier's sole religion—
 But now, by yonder heaven, they talk of right
 The rights of men and citizens, nor think
 That fields, manur'd with blood, and leaguer'd walls
 And thund'ring battlements (to swell the fame
 Of conquerors and Kings), and laureate wreaths
 To the survivors, pay the sighs and groans

Of a few mournful widows !

Ach.

What or who

Has taught them this new doctrine ? have the murmurs

Of this seditious city reach'd the camp ?—

Or is there one among themselves who sows

Those cockles in their minds ?

Joab.

I tell thee, statesman

Uriah must be he !

Ach.

Uriah's name !

Say, is it founded with more dread than yours ?

Does *he* command the camp, conduct the siege ?

Are you the rebel's master or his slave ?—

What dread enchains your tongue, or what prevents

Your sentence on your substitute ?

Joab.

His art

Baffles my rage, nor does he leave a mark

Even for the shafts of slander to infix

Its venom'd point. In loyalty's close mask

He veils the foulness of his deep designs

In darkness and in doubt ! the common camp

Adores his name !—with more than wizard spell

Still as the factious clamour swells to Heaven

His balmy elocution sooths the storm

Like lenient oil on turbid waters pour'd—

Thus voluble and artful as the snake

That poisons with a kiss, he slips the hold

And baffles the pursuer !

Ach.

Curse his virtues !

Worse than the red plague, and the hidden fire
 That wins its fearful way against the wind
 His fame infects even here ! the noisy crowd
 That haunt our streets return his hated name
 In echo to the camp, the storm you fear'd
 Has cross'd another whirlwind in its way
 And sweeps the forest with redoubled rage !

Joab.

And thou and I will in the whirlwind fall
 Unless we foil its fury ! Fate or chance
 That led me here, I thank thee ! else my hand
 Perhaps had never drawn th' imperial sword !
 —Canst thou conjecture yet the King's intent
 With what new honours he designs to load
 His favourite ?

Ach.

But, that I know the King

Bound to his friends by more than kindred ties
 For loyalty, and long-try'd services
 I would have thought he meant to raise him high
 Or in the civil or the martial line.

Joab.

It was not then for nought the soldiers seem'd
 To hail his name at parting, with the sound
 Of many a hearty farewell, and the strain
 Of public benedictions mixt with tears !—
 I see the deadly birth of many a moon
 Begin its dreadful progress in the clouds
 And fall at length in horror on my head

We must return the poison to his lips
Or learn to drain the venom'd bowl ourselves.—

Ach. Depend upon the King !

Joab. The ties of blood !

My hapless hand has cut the holy knot
Long since—my loyalty is like *his* love !—
By a far different tenure I possess
My lofty post, I flourish in his fears
He dreads me, like a phantom of the night—
Whene'er he dares to turn a steady eye
Upon the dark and formidable shape
The shape is gone !—Achitophel ! to thee
This is no mystery ! since I clear'd my way
To military honours thro' the breast
Of Abner !—to my thought, I read my doom
Too plain, in David's alienated eye :
And did he know, that when he gave the word
For slaughter, echo would repeat the doom
From many a factious voice in Israel's camp
He would not linger long ! This to thine ear
I trust with safety, for I know thy doom
Is link'd with mine, and thou wilt lend thine aid
To ward the coming ill.

Ach. Is it even so ?—

aside. Then, let the general sink !—I seize the plank
And seek the shore without him !

To. Could we fix

Joab. Some black impeachment on his hated name

Or could we calm the people's breath that fill
 His swelling sails, and wafts him to the post
 Of royal favour, or, could wishes wake
 The plagues that swept o'er Egypt, soon his head
 Should lye as low as Abner's !—But alas !
 We cannot steer the pinnacle of the state
 Against the heady current of the crowd !

Joab. Ha ! statesman !—is it thus ? have I upheld
 Your pride and rais'd you from the dust to spurn
 Your patron ! but I come not here, on thee
 Dependent, for I know thee ! other arms
 And arts are mine, than puny statesmens skill
 I came no suppliant, with a gentle shower
 Of woman's tears to court thy slender aid
 But tell thee, in a voice of thunder, tell thee
 Thou must dispatch this rival or resolve
 To sink beneath his influence ! he detests
 Thine arts and thee—the watch-day to the wolf
 Bears not more mortal enmity than he
 To thee ! and dost *thou* hope to live, when he
 Rules paramount ? as well the shadowy ghost
 Might dare the sun's full beam, he dies, or thou
 Must fall !

Asb. I now must soothe him, till I point
aside. My dart at leisure for a surer blow !

To Thou hast convinc'd me ! but in David's love
Joab. If he has found protection, who shall dare
 To snatch him thence ?

Joab.

The law of self-protection !

Shall clear thee to thyself ! nor have I shar'd
 With thee so long the chace of common foes
 To doubt thy skill to circumvent or snare ;
 Thine enemies at will ! thou hast the ear
 Of David !—thro' that organ pour the bane
 That taints the mind, thou strik'st as sure a blow
 As if the murtherer's dagger arm'd thy hand !—
 It was no trivial errand call'd me here
 From Ammon's leaguer'd walls ! I could confide
 The secret to no bosom but my own
 And thine—reflect, tho' numerous are my foes
 Yet far more numerous are my friends—they spread,
 From Tadmor's eastern bounds to Jordan's flood !—
 Remember this, and let me ne'er behold
 His hated face again, if thou wouldst wish
 To see thy friend in peace !—I must away
 And join my followers, ere the rosy morn
 Blush for my seeming negligence ! adieu. [Ex. Joab.

Ach.

To-morrow's dawn shall see thee linger here
 Or I am not Achitophel !—Am I
 A man to be insulted, menac'd, plung'd
 In ruin ! selfish man ! he nought regards
 My cause, my life, my honour ! so I lead
 His hated rival to the dark abyfs
 He cares not, tho' I drown along ! but they
 Who guide the helm of state, are not to leave
 The rudder at each hot-brain'd fools' command

* That mutinies for sway ! It seems a trifle
 For you to leave your camp, in mean disguise
 To leave the cause of nations on the point
 And hazard of a moment, to pursue
 Your guiltless foe, and from your Sovereign's heart
 Tear the new favourite, and again secure
 Your station with a second Abner's fall !
 But I have felt your tyranny too long—
 I help'd you ! but the trade of blood has taught
 The gratitude of wolves ! But now, behold !
 Thy savage fury drives thee to a snare
 Thou little dream'st of ! (If the King but dares
 To be that hero which he was of old
 And 'venge a peoples wrongs.)—Let him do this,—
 Sedition's fangs are drawn, and Faction hides
 Her glaring orbs, that (like the comet's beam
 Menac'd the state,) in everlasting sleep !—
 Two savages at once are in my snare
 If one escapes, he rends me—so perhaps
 The other may,—but gratitude would bind
 Uriah's noble nature to repay
 Life for his life, and thanks for dignity—
 The *other's* disposition nought secures
 But adamant, and Hell's eternal chains.—
 This is no time to falter, or delay
 My purpose—who attends there ? Bid the guard
 Secure the outward gate ! A spy is caught

From Rabbah sent ! But see, the King himself ;
This even exceeds my most exalted hopes !

ENTER DAVID.

David. What means this outcry ! these unusual signs
Of trepidation which your visage tells
As if some terrible conspiracy
Was found ?

Ach. My Lord ! if still you think me leagued
With the proud general to secure my sway
By his audacious aid, vouchsafe to hear
And judge my candour, loyalty, and truth
By what I now disclose !—in hot pursuit
Of brave Uriah's guiltless blood, the chief
This military star, the lasting dread
Of Ammon, leaves his post in mean disguise
And dares, beneath the glance of majesty
Beneath the double frown of you and Heaven
To dictate murder to me !

David. Why, and how ?
Amazement ! can it be ? would Joab forsake
His station ? fling aside the general's staff
To seize th' assassin's dagger ? we must be
Convinc'd of this by more than vague report
Belief is tardy to such 'scapes as these,
Prodigious, far beyond the reach of faith !

Ach. Your own sight shall convince you ! for, by this
He is secur'd, and now, if e'er you dar'd

Or when Goliah or his brother fell
 Put on the warrior! strike the rebel down
 With that awaken'd thunder, which (he says,)
 You fear to wield, and start, even at the flash
 Of your own bolt! His partizans are gone
 His faction distant! Here the serpent's head
 By its own fury and revenge impell'd
 Has found its way, a single blow decides
 Its doom, and then, its spires, and deadly sting
 Will cease to threat!

David. How will he meet my eyes?

Ach. Oh think no more on that! but crush him now
 Draw the knot hard that stifles him, or soon
 The furies from thy hand will snatch the cord
 And change it to Rebellion's scourge, to drive
 Thy friends to fill Sedition's deadly files!
 His fall will soothe their rage! the powers above
 Have given another cast for royalty!
 Seize it with noble daring, or you're lost!

David. We must not be precipitate! the bent
 Of Israel's mind would scarcely bear it now!

Ach. Think on their hatred for his crime, the theme
 Of general detestation thro' the tribes!

David. Think how his name's ador'd in Israel's host!

Ach. 'Tis worth the tryal—you may trust too far!—
 Resolve to vindicate your name, or go—
 Go to the wilds again, and stray forlorn
 In Paran's woods, or in her gloomy caves

Conceal your menac'd head! you must not look
 For Heaven's protection now, as when you fled
 From Saul!—*that* was your fate, but this your fault.
 That was a test of holy confidence
 But this, distrust in Heaven—resolve, and strike
 The blow!

David, Is he secur'd?

Ach. He is, but yet
 Feels not the pressure of the viewless snare
 That waves its meshes o'er his sentenc'd head
 Not to be broken, if your *fat* seals
 His doom, at once!—I go, to give the sign
 But must not now be seen!

David. Go, and return
 Even with the expedition of a thought—
 Each moment labours with the births of fate!—
 His actions speak presumption, next to madness—
 They call for punishment, or wild misrule
 Will break subordination, and the child
 Unborn, may live to curse the nerveless hand
 Of Israel's King, who let the ruin spread

[*Exit. Achitophel.*]

Since first I sheath'd the sword that ought to blush
 With penal blood for the lamented fall
 Of Abner, still above my guilty head
 The blade of heavenly justice seems to wave!
 And is there then no second cause—no more
 Let me extend the veil of others crimes

To hide my own abasement!—Hence, avaunt—
 Say, whence and what art thou, insidious fiend
 That strive'st with opiate draught to lull the sense
 Of Inward shame, and point'st another's sin
 As if the blood of Abner could efface
 The stain of David! but perhaps the doom
 Of Joab may break *one* chain, and give the means
 Of reparation to that injur'd man
 Who well deserves, and well can fill the post
 Of this audacious rebel! He is just,
 And loves his King, tho' by the crowd rever'd;
 His name the tumult of the streets resounds
 His name the awful organ of the state
 That speaks in Israel's delegated band
 Exalts, and claims for him the martial wreath
 'Tis Heaven itself the welcome choice inspires
 'Tis Heaven, that bids the tempest lift its voice
 And from the deep and stagnant gulf of air
 Sweeps the contagion of the settled calm
 Away!—I will obey the awful sign
 And lull the storm by some great sacrifice
 Before the whirlwind lays my honour low,
 And spreads them in the dust—the voice of blood *
 Cries for revenge, and strikes the vault of Heaven.

Exit David.

* Viz. Of Abner, whom Joab had assassinated.

Scene—A Prison.

Joab. The statesman's art at last has gain'd the day
 And I must fall, the victim of my pride
 And folly!—I have heard of miracles
 But never knew a lion snar'd before
 In such a vile envenom'd spider's web.—
 My blood must pay the purchase of his guile—
 But force I dread not—David would not risque
 The stroke of public justice. But the steel
 Of the assassin, or the well-drug'd bowl
 Will do the deed, and Abner's fall atone.—
 Blood will have blood—and is there such a charm
 In dying groans, that they can pierce the clouds
 And wake the sleeping thunder?—When I feel
 The bolt, I will believe it. But my heart
 Still keeps its wonted measure—I may live
 (For so my mind presages) to repay
 My enemies, with grateful recompense.—
 But who comes here? he does not bear the stamp
 Of an assassin! royalty and youth
 Blend in his aspect their united charms
 —'Tis Absalom—he has not yet forgot
 His ancient friends, altho' in faithless courts
 Long educated; well I know his mind

Fearless and prompt as light'ning, yet as dark
 As gathering tempests wrapt in midnight gloom
 Altho' a beauteous surface hides that heart—
 —What may this visit bode?

TO HIM ABSALOM.

- Abf.* What have we here
 An eagle in a cage?
- Joab.* True, royal youth! the kites
 And daws have won the day!
- Abf.* But who could dream
 To see thee here! Is this thy generalship
 To leave the siege?
- Joab.* A little time had told
 The purpose of this step, a slender space
 Had shown, it was *thy* cause as much as mine!—
 The common claim of royalty, the safety
 Of David's house, as much as my command
 That led me from the camp in this disguise
 For one impending peril threatens both.
- Abf.* This artful involution of your cause
 With ours, were calculated well to gain
 Our favour, were it true.
- Joab.* By nobler arts
 In happier times I thought I gain'd your love
 And, low as I am now reduc'd, I scorn
 By adulation's little arts to glose
 A bad cause over!—What I say, I'll prove.—

There is no room for hope, and if there were
I scorn by falsehood to obtain the boon.

Abf. I came not here to offer hope, or try
With empty promises of useless aid
To soothe your dying moments—yet, if duty
The interest of my father, and the state
Permitted me to use my power, thy life
Were safe as mine !

Joab. I know thy influence well
And well you know that I could pay, the price
Of thy protection, were I once again
In freedom to collect my numerous friends :
But let me fall, by vulgar arts o'erthrown,
Ere I expose the life of David's son
To danger by my flight !

Abf. I know thy love—
aside. (Rather thy interest—) and could well depend
Upon thy loyalty : but other bars
Divide my cause and thine—my name upholds
The people's privilege ! I swell the breath
Of opposition ; you support the power
Of new prerogative extended far
Beyond its ancient bounds !—

Joab. (I see his views !—)
aside. And wouldst thou wish the people's privilege
Extended equal to their haughty claims ?
Wouldst thou desire to see Uriah rule
The banded powers of Israel ? trust me, Prince !

That stern republican would lift his crest
 Above the fading glories of the crown
 And with its gems, purloin the public voice
 To sanctify the robbery ! those brave youths
 Who eastward far in conquest spread the name
 Of David, soon would see their mould'ring bands
 Sink like the files of Lebanon before
 The woodman's stroke ! disbanded, or confin'd
 Tamely in garrisons to waste their prime
 And on our castled frontiers, face the foe
 As lordly lions from their range confin'd
 And chain'd, like shepherds dogs ! would this become
 The throne of Judah ? *You* might see the time
 When thou wouldst mourn the change, and weep to view
 The martial fire of Israel thus confin'd
 To fume away like smother'd lamps, at home !
 How would the Arab, and the Ammonite
 Rejoice to see the torrent of our rage
 That swept their sandy plains, repose at last
 In dull stagnation ?

Abf.

Tho' I seem to blame

The bloody trophies from our neighbours won
 And fill the cry of faction, to preserve
 The interest of our family alive
 And raise an artificial mound, to stem
 The sinking torrent of the people's love
 That fleets from David's name so fast away ;
 Yet, were this head ordain'd to fill the crown

I would not wish it had a hold so slight
 As to be puff'd away, by every breath
 Of popular discontent, I would not chuse
 A bulrush for my sceptre, to be bent
 By every breeze that blows !

Joab.

And wouldst thou wish

Like a state-captive, to implore thy guards
 For liberty—to leave the palace dungeon
 And breathe the liberal air? wouldst thou submit
 To have thy progress bounded by the stream
 Of Cedron's brook, nor ever from the brow
 Of Olivet to see thy subject vales
 Wave with their plenteous harvest? this must be
 The fate of David! he has lost the people,
 By the same cause that lost his own esteem.
 And when this head lies low, as soon it must,
 Be this my consolation, that those eyes
 Shall not behold my Monarch's low disgrace,
 Condemn'd at stated holidays to show
 The gaudy pageant of fallen royalty
 Led in the rabbles triumph!—

Abf.

This the sun

Shall never see, if I survive to fill
 The throne of Judah !

Joab.

How canst thou avoid

This doom, if David shows the crowd the way
 To domineer above the falling crown
 How wilt thou stem the torrent when it roars

When that vile bird, that pecks the royal image
 Grows to an eagle size, with all her brood
 Of feather'd imps about her, long enur'd
 To prey on kingly power? then, who will dare
 To clip their wings, or lure them from the scent
 Of palace plunder? not the boasted wand
 Of Moses, which dismiss the living cloud
 Of locusts to the Erythrean main!

Abf. There still are hopes, for yet this vulture's nest
 Is callow, and a little art can rule
 The unfledg'd family!

Joab. Yes — would the King
 Resign to thee the sceptre, or admit thee
 The partner of his throne, he then might rule
 O'er all the hearts in Israel.

Abf. Would that awe
 Due to my father, to my faltering voice
 Give its full compass, I could claim my share
 Of royalty, in thunder's deepest note!

Joab. I praise thy piety, that deigns to wait
 For thy legitimate boon, till sage Uriah
 A profelyte to loyalty and order
 Allows the sapient measure, founded deep
 In wisdom, and permits thy greener boughs
 To climb the withering stem of royalty
 And clothe it with new blossoms!

Abf. Deep I feel,
 The keen edge of thy censure! Jesse's stem
 Was never doom'd to bend and sue for grace

To this new favourite, by a female hand
Rais'd to the pitch of greatness !

Joab. On that theme
Silence befits us best. The mind may see
What our eyes wink at !—

Abf. Yet a thought occurs !
I am not deeply read in Israel's story
But say—was Saul, the royal Benjamite
Chosen by the voice of Heaven, or of the people !

Joab. Nam'd by the prophet, but the common vote
Confirm'd it !

Abf. Then the people in their tribes
Pronounc'd the will of Heaven !—another question ! —
Was not this Benjamite, (altho' by Heaven
Propos'd, and by the people's voice confirm'd—)
Yet by a righteous mandate set aside
Hurl'd from his throne, altho' the sentence hung
In short suspense ; did he not wear the crown
And royal mantle like a victim drest
For hallow'd butchery, before he fell
In Gilboa's fatal field ?

Joab. Your sire possess'd
The sanction of the prophet—long before
The death of Saul. *His* hatred rose from hence —
Hence rose his persecution of thy father.

Abf. The people's voice at Hebron chose my father,
Their acclamations rais'd him to the stars,
But now the buoyance of their breath subsides,
And down he sinks !

Joab.

Thy words forerun my thoughts,
 And give that breath, which I had scarce presum'd
 To picture in my mind ! Nay, do not start !
 The low declining cause of royalty
 (Tho' by unusual methods) must be prop'd ;
 The public is our first concern, whate'er
 Becomes of private ties.

Abf.

'Tis piety
 To save a father, plunging in the stream,
 Tho' at th' expence of half his cumbrous robes,
 Which hinders his exertion. It were sacrilege
 To strip a parent, were it not to save
 His life.

Joab.

Were but those hands unchain'd,
 My voice could call ten thousand warlike hands
 To aid thy claim !

Abf.

I have the people's voice—
 Yet such a great and arduous enterprize
 Throbbes at my heart in ominous presage !—
 I dread the hazard of a precious life.
 My father will not tamely share his crown,
 Tho' all the tribes demand it ! He has still
 His band of heroes to support his claim,
 Uriah at their head !

Joab.

Had David fled
 The prophet's holy unction, he had kept
 The flocks of Bethlehem still, and never grasp'd
 The rod of royalty. But thou, perhaps,

Of royal favour, and your voice to him
(If I deceive you) can at once secure
The rule of Israel's bands !

Alf.

The dye is cast —

I free thy *body* to secure thy *mind*—
But with the strong and viewless bond of souls
I first must bind you fast. I go to find
The means of your enfranchisement.

[*Exit.*

Joab.

Why go !—

I like thy soaring spirit ! but, alas !
How shallow to suppose, my schemes possess
As little reach as thine ! Shall I employ
My master-engine, form'd with patient art,
To play for children's bidding, to disturb
The settled elements, and almost disjoint
Both worlds, to mount a bubble on the breeze
For fools to laugh at ? No—presumptuous boy !
Thou didst not feel the still and subtle breath
That blew thy flame to such a raging height.—
My lungs deny their office, and thy blaze
Goes out ! The stubble is consum'd that fed
The conflagration. Go—Convene thy tribes,
Hollow sedition in the general ear,
And bid the trumpet of rebellion sound,
Emblaze the streaming flag of proud revolt
With gorgeous colours of necessity,
And exigence of state ! I'll aid the king.
My loyal trump shall blow a blast so loud,

As soon shall drown thy factious minstrelsie,
 And stun sedition's bands. A fair pretext
 Thy riot shall afford, to weed the land
 Of all those rash and fiery volunteers
 That spend their mouths and bark at royalty
 'Till this shall found again my tottering power
 On adamant base! the King shall reign
 My delegate, and I his earthly God—
 Hark—to the jarring music of yon gate
 Hail! glorious freedom! hail! unbounded sway!—

End of the THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

The Palace,

ACHITOPHEL.

Was it the fiction of an hideous dream
 That gave the General to my cheated view
 Or did that demon, who protects him still
 Bring him in sight, and waft him hence away
 To propagate his guilt and force the King
 And me, on dreadful measures? Must we then

Complete the bloody task ? does hell's deep gorge
 Claim her detested sacrifice ? behold
 Those haughty lines, trac'd with a rapid hand,
 " *I have escap'd the snare ! thou canst not spread*
 " *Cobwebs for eagles. Wouldst thou save thyself*
 " *Thou knowst the ransom. Tremble and obey !*
 " *Reflect on Abner's fall.*" Unheard presumption—
 —But let me curb my tongue ! those walls have ears
 Those palace-gates, that open'd to his flight
 Spontaneous, to the viewless hand, that aids
 His hopes, would close on *me*, did any word
 Escape, which courtly malice could distort
 To treason ! well I see, but dare not own
 I know the hand that freed him ! hapless King !
 Thou too must render up thy steadfast friend
 To soothe these tygers ? or they leap the fence
 And o'er the fold in devastation range—
 And, if mistaken tenderness unsteels
 Thy resolution, thou, or I am lost ;
 Lost in the whirlwind of the General's rage
 Or in the deep devouring gulf absorpt
 Of thy proud son's ambition !—all my trust
 Is only this, that selfish ends will lead
 The royal rebel, and the haughty chief
 To foul suspicion of each others views
 And each will think himself unsafe, unless
 By force or fraud he fastens on the power
 Own'd by the other !—Thus, between two storms

Of adverse wing, the royal barque may ride
 Awhile in safety, tho' in giddy whirls
 Dash'd round and round. This fury of the field
 We first must sooth, the tyger of the court
 Is yet unfang'd!—But here the father comes
 Incens'd, yet trembling at the prospect sad
 Of sure domestic strife!

TO HIM, DAVID.

David. To thee I owe
 That here I stand deserted by my friends
 And, of my God forsaken!

Ach. (Thus the guilty
aside. And the unfortunate, on others, strive
 To sling the galling load that weighs them down)
 My royal master knows, the guard to me
 Was not permitted!

David. Has my son the heart
 (Unless, by some fell demon of the state
 Some pupil of left-handed policy
 Like thee, seduc'd) to meet his Father's rage?—
 If you revere not Joab, you fear his wrath!—

Ach. I therefore wish his fall!—

David. I know not that—
 I know thee subtle, undermining, dark:
 One, that would worship Moloch for his power
 And to his burning idol sacrifice
 The son of thine own bowels!

Ach.

Tho' I feel

The keen reproach, yet to thy grief alone
 I charge its bitterness!—a cooler moment
 When your corroding anguish is assuag'd
 Will tell thee, that had I conniv'd at this
 I ne'er had staid behind to meet thy rage,
 But to the General's camp for shelter fled!—
 The hand, perhaps that freed him, is beyond
 The seizure of thy power, or claims at least
 Some spell, to ward the tempest from his head.

David.—Oh! that my memory could escape that pang!—

Thou takest thy time to probe a father's wound
 When Heaven's deep judgment has disarm'd his hand
 Else thou hadst not presum'd!—but thou, perhaps
 Art leagued with both against thy sovereign lord.

Ach. Secure my faith at once! the solemn tomb*opening*
his Contains no traitors, and my dust-clos'd ear*breast.* Will hear no imputations, which my soul
Abhors!*David.* I know not whom, or what to trust?

Forgive my rage—forgive a father's anguish
 To madness driven by the degeneracy
 And treason of a much-lov'd son—Degeneracy!
 From whom degenerate? am I not a rebel
 A rebel to myself, and to my God
 My country's foe? and can I blame the power
 That, when I lost the reins of self-command,
 Let loose this bosom tyger; yet less guilty

Than those black passions which laid waste before
 Each province of the intellectual world,
 And manacled my reason? I must bear it!
 Soon too, perhaps, the voice of public shame
 Will thunder in my ears! My untold crimes,
 Like deadly exhalations in the gale,
 Will rise, and poison all the ambient air,
 Till Nature's self, whose glories once I sung,
 Will sicken at my name!

Ach. That danger yet,
 I trust, is far remote!

David. How can you trust,
 Or how believe? Does not Uriah feel
 Bathsheba's guilt?

Ach. He keeps in silence still
 His knowledge, or his doubts. A stronger spell
 May lead him home. The banquet is begun
 By your command. The failure of a night,
 Chance might have caus'd, or some fantastic vow.

David O for a prophet's eye, to mark the scenes
 To-morrow's sun must see!
 This night, revolving on her ebon throne,
 Winds up the doom of Bathsheba and me.
 I cannot bear to ponder on her doom.
 Ruin'd by me, for me to public shame,
 Perhaps, to ignominious death expos'd.—
 On me, me, rather let the tempest fall—
 I was the tempter, I deprav'd her mind,

I blew the embers of a former flame
To their first conflagration.

Ach.

Yet, my lord,

All may be well. You tremble at a shade,
The coinage of your fancy. If her spouse
Can stand the siege of circulating bowls,
Of music's charm, and hymeneal songs,
Warm as the amorous descant in the grove
Of Araby the blest, which to the fair
The raptur'd lover chants, as evening draws
Around their flowery couch her raven pall;
Then is he more than man. But he will melt,
The subtle spirit thro' his nerves will thrill,
Till his rapt fancy represents his spouse
Drest in the bridal robe, while o'er her cheek
Soft wishes and soft fears alternate stray!

David. Night wears apace, and soon the crisis comes.

Go thou and watch his passions how they tend,
Whether the bowl has sooth'd his cares asleep,
Or drawn the painful secret from his heart.
If so, we must prepare to meet the worst.

Ach.

I go.—[*Aside.*] (But I have spirits there at work
Thou little dream'st of, to unlock the soul,
And draw the painful secret forth in storms.
The noble savage must be roused to rage,
Else he would ne'er be tempted to the snare.)

[*Exit* Achitophel.]

David Oh ! what a torture of suspense I feel,
 While in the balance of my rival's mind,
 That plays with every breeze, my doubtful doom
 Hangs trembling ! If resentment steels his soul
 Against his spouse, to-morrow's rising sun
 Lights up my shame, and paints my midnight deeds
 To gazing multitudes ! Already Heaven
 Has left me, and I now must court the power
 Of reeling madness, in the luscious grape
 To aid my purpose ! To what noxious fiend
 Must I address my prayer, to cloud the beam
 Of reason, and before suspicion's eye
 His gaudy tints display, that lead the mind,
 Like the night-wand'ring fire to seeming safety ?—
 Oh, blessed times ! when, thro' the rustling storm
 Of fell adversity, that howl'd around,
 When in each breeze I heard the savage yell
 Of them that fought my life ; against the gale,
 That seem'd to bear my blasted hopes away,
 My prayers could gain the steep ascent to Heaven,
 And draw a beam of comfort from the skies
 That shot athwart the gloom its vernal ray,
 And lighten'd all within ! Tho' lonely caves
 Conceal'd my slumbers, and the desert hills
 Oft saw my midnight steps pursued along
 By the rude tempest, and relentless man
 I did not fear *you* then, my deadliest foes !
 Seducing demons ! who in gaudy shapes

Bask in the day-dreams of unruffled life.
 The air was winnowed *then* by wholesome gales
 That shatter'd your fine forms, and bore away
 The fraudful vision ! In the thunder's voice
 I heard the plaudit of approving Heaven—
 Even the fierce lightning wing'd my ardent soul
 Above the conflict of these elements,
 To scenes of endless peace ! Now all is peace
 Abroad. The deadly feud begins within.—
 Oh ! for his voice again, tho' in the tone
 Of Heaven's terrific organ, as it spoke
 With awful voice, yet friendly, to the land
 Of Egypt ! I would hail the welcome sound —
 Now, like a barque becalm'd, with languid sails,
 I'm left to slumber on the stagnant wave,
 While the wild passions rise in rude revolt
 Against their pilot, whose unprosperous hand
 So madly trifled with the friendly gale !—
 I cannot linger thus—Impatience burns
 For some relief ! But soon the crisis comes.
 The watchful eye of Jealousy may sleep
 By love, compos'd to rest, and peace return !

[Exit.]

SCENE III.

ELIEZER, JONADAB; URIAH—AS RISING FROM A BANQUET.

Eliezer.

You had his love before—the public voice
Now sanctions his—and, on the swelling gale
Of popular applause your worth shall mount
To heights unthought before ! Then, why this caution ?
This cold reserve ? I would not with the king
Should know it, he would deem such cool return
But ill beseem'd a friend so nobly try'd
In fortune's worst extreme.

Uri.

(I see your drift,

Aside.

But I will ward the blow.)

Enough, my friends,

For temperance—the social rite is paid.
Courts are the scenes for revels, mirth, and joy—
It is so *now* at least. There *was* a time
When other maxims rul'd the royal household ;
But different manners suit with different men.—
Here, while the full tide flows of genial joy,
And crowns the rosy bowl, it ebbs afar
At Rabbah, where the bands of Israel watch

The midnight, rude, alarm from Ammon's walls.—
 It suits not *me* to banquet, while my friends,
 Perhaps, in bleak want spend the livelong night,
 Their convoys by the roving Arab seiz'd—
 It does not suit a soldier.

Jon. If my thoughts
 Could wander from the present scene, nor camps,
 Nor ambuscadoes, nor the night-alarm
 Would claim my contemplation ! Other views
 Of more pacific import, might demand
 The meditations of a youthful mind.

Eliex. Where would your fancy point ?

Jon. To rosy bowers,
 And moonlight glades, by gentle whispers led,
 And beauteous forms, soft stealing from the view,
 Where no rude trumpet, nor barbarian yell
 Disturb the sleeping lovers !

Uri. Such thefts as these
 Have often stolen the laurel from the brow
 Of conquering Israel, and transfixt her shield
 With hostile javelins ; still, where'er we turn'd
 Our waving banners, our most deadly foes
 Were found at home !

Jon. What magisterial censure.

Aside. But he is gall'd—I fear we've gone too far.

Eliex. Pardon a jest—the language of our friend
 Is free—perhaps, his manners not less pure
 Than those that wear religion's darkest mask.

Uri. I own my ignorance, nor yet can learn
 How, when th' unguarded ear, and roving eye
 Is open to contagion, by the use
 Of this too liberal language, from the taint
 The mind can 'scape.

Jon. Plain truth was never
 So deep a crime before—but I am school'd.

Uri. Do you adorn it with the sacred stamp
 Of manly plainness thus to blazon vice?

Eliuz. You're too punctilious—form'd of antique mould
 And wedded to the ways of a republic
 They fit not monarchies.—those sterner virtues
 Might suit, perhaps, the camp where Joshua rul'd,
 Or Gideon.—But the season now is gone!
 There was a time to mourn and beat the breast
 'Tis gone—the storms of winter now are past
 And jocund May leads on the playful hours.—

Uri. Virtue and honour I suppos'd the same—
 The same their obligations, not to change
 With cloud or sunshine, like the vernal flower
 That courts the rising sun, and folds her leaves
 When night ascends.

Eliuz. While, like the vigorous stem
 Of baleful yew, that braves the winter blast
 You wear your gloomy honours thick upon you
 And sicken all the sacred train of mirth
 Around! I envy not such solemn pomp.
 The blessed sun that warms my mounting blood
 Points other joys to me!—

Uri.

The people's voice,

The language of misrule, the general cry
 Of mutiny ; do those with soft applause,
 Immortalize that riot, and excess
 That cause the intestine plague ?—*they* too proclaim
 Your vices with like freedom to the world
 But in a louder tone, and boldly tell,
 What you conceal, the ruin that attends
 Such principles.

Eliez.

That man may preach at ease

Of temper'd blood, and boast his self-command
 Whom heavenly virtue in an angel's form
 Expects, to bless his honourable toils
 At home with mutual rapture.—

Uri.

Now, by Heaven—

Did not my honest sword disdain the blood
 Of such a venom'd sycophant, a reptile
 Bred in the sunshine of a court, that word
 Had been your last !—malignant miscreant
 The sting within that sneer, which fits a fiend
 In all the triumph of infernal glee
 Confirms it ! cursed be those fatal charms
 And doubly curst, the guilt-concealing hour
 When first her broken faith became the theme
 Of court applause !

Jon.

What fiend impels you thus

Beyond the bounds of reason ? say, what proof
 What test, or knowlege of your spouses guilt ?

What wretch so busy with a matron's fame
As to compel you thus to blast her truth
With foulest imputation?

Uri. All the skill
Of glozing rhetoricians, to conceal
Or varnish o'er her guilt, are futile! vain!—
If the light gossamer might wrap the limbs
Of the fell tyger, or the famish'd pard
In lasting bondage; then the slimy art
Of courtiers might controul my waken'd rage!—

Jon. Your proofs I know not—all is new to me
As my surprize!

Uri. It is no common pain
That wrings the secret from a soldier's breast
Which burns the cheek to tinder, and writes shame
Indelible, a foul, stigmatic mark
On him and his for ever! Do I live
And am I patient underneath my wrongs?—
No—earth shall tremble, and high heaven applaud
My vengeance! I have proofs, convincing proofs!—
Why—honest nature spoke it in her face
At her first sight of me! tho' she was school'd
Prepar'd, and tutor'd (as it since appear'd)
For the encounter! I was warn'd before—
And she had dress'd her looks to scorn surprize
But a few searching questions soon brought up
The conscious blood to her adulterous cheeks!
And she had paid the forfeit on the spot

But Heaven restrain'd me !

Jon. Have you nought but this !

No proof, no evidence ?

Uri. Yes—proofs on proofs,

As soon the sun shall see !—

Jon. Forgive—forget !

Are you a soldier ?—Let your self-command.

Proclaim your manhood !

Uri. I—shall I forgive ?

To let contempt pursue my taintless name ?

Tamely to suffer wrong ?—It must not be.

Tho' all the vicious court connives at crimes,

Uriah shall revenge, tho' yawning hell

Should flame across his way !

Eliez. And how revenge ?

You little think how strong an arm is rais'd

To guard her threaten'd life !

Uri. Altho' the fiend

Who blasted all my hopes, should take the form

Of one, who proudly boasts the royal blood ;

The FATHER of his PEOPLE, would revenge,

Altho' the stroke should wound a father's soul !

The safety of his throne, his spotless name,

Demand the painful task.

Jon. Should he deny—

Should he, to screen the high-born criminal,

Offer unhop'd for honours, and a place

Which envy might repine at, and your foes

Lament to see, could you support the thought
 That your blind vengeance had embroil'd the house
 Of David, and transfixt a father's heart
 With grief's envenom'd shaft, and burning shame?—
 Ponder the sad result, before you dip
 Your foot in blood:—

Uri.

Will Justice hear the plea?

Eternal Justice! will *she* break her sword
 Because a father weeps? Will his salt tears
 Assuage the penal flames, that heavenly wrath
 Awakes to punish crimes? Heaven to *this* hand
 Entrusts her awful cause, and were I false
 To her eternal trust, the crimes to come
 Patron'd by this example, would derive
 Their blackest guilt from me, (should I refuse
 To draw the delegated sword of vengeance)
 A soldier's honour, and religion calls,
 It is the cause of man, the cause of heaven,
 And by our mighty legislator's soul
 I will not slumber till I 'venge his laws!—
 I'll instant to the king, and boldly claim
 The strumpet's doom, and if the king denies
 My claim—my country's universal voice,
 Swell'd to an hurricane, shall echo mine—
 Ten thousand hands shall drag the culprit hence,
 Even from the guarded steps of Judah's throne!

[*Exit Uriah.*]

JONADAB—ELIEZER.

Jon. See what a tempest your ungovern'd tongue
 Has rais'd! Was *this* a time to gall the wound
 That rankled in the husband's heart? The king
 Will on thy folly charge whatever ills
 May come; my care had mixt a cup of balm
 To lull the soldier's anguish, and my hand
 Perhaps, had drawn a soft and gaudy veil
 Between his mental eye, and those dire scenes
 That wake his fury. With unhappy hand
 You tore the curtain down, and gave to view
 Those hideous images that fire the brain!
 By Heavens, the King shall know it—not on me
 The blame shall lie!

Eliez. Go! and inform the King
 Short-sighted man! and are you then to learn
 Who gave th' ingredients which this skilful hand
 Dash'd in the soldier's bowl?—their first effect
 (Like other poisons,) seems ungovern'd rage
 And furious frenzy; but this stormy gust
 Will soon fatigue itself, and work its end.
 The tempest sweeps along the waste of Heaven
 And seems to drive the baffled vapours on
 In rude voluminous triumph, but full soon
 It breathes its rage away—the gloomy foes
 Rally their files o'er all the shaded sky

Surround their victor, and involve his plumes
In humid bondage, while the welkin weeps
The wild winds durance, in continuous flow.

Jon. Explain your mystic words.

Eliuz.

There is no need—

The dread event that labours to the birth
Shall soon disclose it. Tho' Uriah seems
(Exulting in his freedom) to defy
The congregated powers of earth and hell,
And on the public favour to rely,
Yet thro' the waste of night, across the wild,
O'er many a desert league of burning sand,
All viewless to the eye, the waving snare
Extends, which wraps the warrior in its folds.
His hands are fetter'd, tho' he feels it not,
And soon his silent tongue shall own the spell.

Jon. But why provoke his rage?

Eliuz.

The bird, that strives

In the fine meshes of the fowler's snare,
But binds himself the firmer, and exhausts
His little strength in vain! That clamorous rage,
That haughty language of insulted honour,
These vows of vengeance, and that fiery glance,
Whose lightning seem'd to wither all around,
Were but the playthings of superior art,
That bids the tempest rage, and the rude blast
Harrow the sea, and cover any shore
We please, with shatter'd wrecks! While we above,

From the calm summit of imperial skill,
 Laugh at the lightnings as they dance along
 Th' interminable waste of clouds below.
 This is our triumph, tho' the awful scenes
 Are yet involv'd in night !

Jon. Your words, I fear,
 Import Uriah's doom ; and must he fall ?
 Is there no charm to soothe a husband's rage,
 But death's eternal sleep ! No refuge given
 But the asylum of the quiet tomb,
 For his swoln anguish ?

Eliez. Hear me, and be dumb
 For ever ! He, or thou and I must fall,
 Should he survive ; his wrongs, the people's voice,
 His claims of public favour, would compel
 Even David to adopt him, and resign
 To his stern grasp the rudder of the state. !
 The barque, indeed, might steer in safety on,
 But we, the ancient leaders of the crew,
 Must perish, or forsake the lightned keel ;
 His zeal would deem us but the useless lumber
 Of the disorder'd ship ; or, should we 'scape
 The wreck that threatens from Uriah's pride,
 We could not stem another deadlier storm,
 That from another coast of angry heaven,
 Threatens no less—the general, his sworn foe—
 Tho' secret, never will forgive the men
 Who let Uriah 'scape the deadly snare

That holds him now—and well you know, his hate
 Is mortal, as his power is uncontroll'd.
 I had my orders, else I had not dar'd
 To rouse the lion's rage. Behold the king!—
 My task demands me, I must not be found
 To loiter at this juncture.—Fare thee well.—

[Exeunt severally.]

Scene continues.

ENTER DAVID AND ACHITOPHEL.

Ach. Yet he may live ;—but royalty must die
 If he survive ; subordination, rule,
 And order, all must cease !

David. Did he disdain
 The proffer'd honour ! Did he scorn the bounty
 Of him, whose friendship was his noblest pride
 Of old ?

Ach. You seem to doubt your faithful servant.
 If you would condescend yourself to try
 His temper, and observe the brooding storm
 Beneath the settled gloom that clouds his brow,
 Your doubts would end in certainty !

David. Alas !
 I know too much. I heard him threaten loud,
 And shake the palace with vindictive rage.

This is not to be borne ! Yet, coward conscience !

—I trembled at the menace of my slave

As if the thunder lent its awful sound

To every accent—what does he resolve ?

Ach. I know not—thro' the hall that fronts the gate
He roams disturb'd, and often smites his brow
Then calls on friendship, and arraigns the name
Of hapless love !

David. Did any word or sign
When the freed soul was strip'd of its disguise
And spurn'd all danger from a mortal foe
Seem then to point at me ?

Ach. Not, as I heard—
He rather seem'd on you to place his trust.

David. The torture of the fiends is in the thought !
Generous, believing man ! altho' I know
That whatsoever sycophant disclos'd
His consort's lapse, with keen malignant joy
Pointed at me, yet, tardy of his faith
My friend, my injur'd friend ! believ'd him not !
Why will he rush on danger thus and brave
Perdition for the sake of doubtful vengeance
I cannot, must not hurt him ! I have sinn'd
Beyond redress already—I must save him !

Ach. I'm lost, if he relents !—My royal Lord

aside. Trust not appearance—he may know too much
Tho' with such art his knowledge he conceals,
Design'd, perhaps, to throw you off your guard

And give him means to strike the surer blow)
 Your noble nature flings a gorgeous veil
 Of seeming excellence before your sight !
 Thro' your own matchless medium you behold
 The characters of others. Every tint
 Of your own genuine virtues, on their shadows
 Reflected falls, and gilds the vapours o'er
 (Like evening's watry vest !) with fluid gold !
 Dost thou suppose Uriah's soaring soul
 Can stoop to wrongs, and to a woman's fall
 Limit his daring ? He has other views !
 Go to the senate ! to the crowded camp !
 You see his footsteps like a stormy god
 Thro' the tumultuous waves : across the wild
 And o'er the burning sand, Uriah's name
 Loads the full gale : from Arnon's distant shore
 To Salem's towers, the thorough-fare of Heaven
 On its broad bosom wings from clime to clime
 The magic syllables ! the common herd
 Nay, even the reverend Sanhedrim proclaim
 The seeming virtues, which adorn the robe
 That hides his dark ambition !—do you doubt ?—
 Doubt on ! till faction and revolt o'erturns
 The steady balance of imperial power !—
David. His guilt at least is dubious—mine is certain
 I'll own it—ask forgiveness—well I know
 His generous nature !—

Ach.

Did you ever know

This generous friend forsake his first resolve?—

I grant his nobleness of mind as high

As e'er upheld the diadem, or rod

Of regal sway: will he consent to foil

His taintless honours with degrading shame

And live, a breathing monument of scorn?—

He would not for this kingdom! He'll revenge

His wrongs on you, or her.

David.

Did not my fall

Involve a people, I would much prefer

My fall to hers—for oh! whatever power

In love's soft name has fasten'd on my heart

There, there it domineers! the purple tide

That warms my veins, is not more native there!—

Nor does the watry waste obey the moon

With more subjection.

Ach.

You must learn to bear

Her loss!—But that is small—you must already

Have own'd the call of Prudence to resign her

To her first Lord—already you have felt

The cruel, deep divorce!—the second pang

Will not be half so poignant as the first!

David. Too deep I feel the bitter irony!—

I know his proud integrity would scorn

To mingle with contagion!—Hell reward

The man, that told the secret! But for him

All had been well!

Act.

We only now must toil

For the best possible ! among the worst
 There is a choice of evils ; when the hope
 Of good is gone already ! well I know
 (Or my old observation quite has fail'd)
 There's danger in the man ! His smooth address
 His favour with the populace, denote
 Sinister meaning—His attractions draw
 Like the sun's influence to the point of noon
 The wat'ry vapours, till his stores are full
 And then the deluge comes and drowns the world.

David. I cannot think it !*Act.* Confiding in his pity ! He perhaps

May grant forgiveness and again receive
 His consort to his bosom—No—by Heaven
 He ne'er will do it ; were there nought besides
 To steel his resolution but the fear
 Of losing popular favour, should his baseness
 Be known as it must be !—at least surmise
 Would construe all the honours he might gain
 To shameful bribes for silence and consent.
 A man may oft be injur'd in his bed
 While it's unknown, and may be still a man—
 If he consents, and looks upon the theft
 With undistinguishing, cool apathy
 He is no more a man, but a vile slave—
 An idiot :—such Uriah ne'er was deem'd

David. A dreadful aggravation of my crime !

All this, in horrible detail I saw
 Ere my first lapse, a certain consequence—
 And yet I fell—tho' leisure was allow'd
 For full deliberation, and the damp
 Of cold presage, that chill'd me to the heart
 Might well have bid th' unhallow'd ardour cool—
 I persever'd, and now I must go on
 Or perish by retreat : a stable stand
 On those deluding, slippery paths of vice
 Is not allow'd.

Ach. Can you resign her ?

David. Never !—

She lives an inmate here ! Even Nature's voice
 Declares her born for me, and me for her !—

Ach. Make her for ever thine.

David. But how ?

Ach. All men

Are mortal, and the shaft that flies by day
 Or pestilence, that walks the gloom of night
 May reach their lives !

David. Ha ! Belial ! name it not !

The thought is madness ! must adultery then
 Be cloaked by murder ?

Ach. Think Bathsheba lost,

Fallen, fallen a victim to the Judge's doom
 You live a victim to the public scorn
 Perhaps, dethron'd and exil'd ! that is small.—

David. What worse? exile with her, could she be sav'd
 Were—but I rave!—some frenzy fires my brain!
 Must I, by merit rais'd, when haughty Saul
 Had fallen from Heaven's protection, thus abuse
 The gift?

Ach. I own, in thee religion lives
 Thy fall involves her ruin, on thy head
 The solemn fabric sinks, with all its pomp
 And Israel's veneration, turn'd with toil
 From idols, like the tide that bursts its bounds
 Reverts with violence to its former course—
 A single life prevents it!—

David. What a life!

Ach. When Abraham and Jephthah first resolv'd
 To sacrifice their children, was there nought
 To wring the bosom, or to melt the heart?
 And what induc'd them, but religion's cause?
 What seal'd the father's vow? religion's cause.
 He for religion's cause a daughter slew
 You scruple to resign a dangerous man
 Whose life protracted, threatens the very soul
 Of state, religion, and your life itself!—
 For when it threatens your life, it threatens all!
 Religion's being on your life depends!
 —You must acquire more fortitude, or sink
 Beneath your numerous foes!

David. I must not think.

Ach. There is no time for thought—resolve at once—
 Dost thou not wish the obstacle remov'd
 By any safe expedient?—Search thy heart—
 Examine well within! I know thou dost—
 But Heaven, that marks the movements of the mind,
 In equal balance weighs the guilty deed,
 And guilty thought! Already is thy mind
 Deep stain'd with blood, in Heaven's impartial eye,
 And sentence past already. What remains
 But give th' imperial mandate—and 'tis o'er—
 One act of penitence atones for all.

David And must I yield against my better sense?—
 My reason reels, and all within is doubt.

Ach. No choice is given, but everduring shame,
 Or one decisive blow, that lops away
 The noxious plant that shades your nobler views.
 It is a public cause, the cause of kings,
 Of Israel! And shall private cares pervert
 That necessary doom, which public love
 Demands? Can you resolve to suffer shame,
 (The last of ills! which angels scarce can bear)
 To see the tribes assembled to thy fall,
 Like some stern woodman's train, whose sturdy strokes
 Affail the noblest plant of all the grove,
 Till, overcome by many a ruthless blow,
 It bows th' aerial head and sweeps the ground?
 Will you encounter this, and live to see
 Some alien stem transplanted in your room.

Some Gentile god, with solemn rites abhorr'd,
 Expell the dread of Israel from his shrine?—
 Such things must be, if to the rising gust
 Of popular fury stern Uriah joins
 His vengeful clamours—should he send around
 The dreadful tokens of a husband's wrath,
 Thro' each astonish'd tribe, as he of old,*
 Who turn'd the torrent of a people's rage
 On one devoted town, and sacrific'd
 A slaughter'd people for a wife abus'd;
 What were the consequence?—Wild anarchy,
 And nameless horrors! Law, religion, form,
 And loyalty, all trampled under foot.
 Bathsheba's sprinkled blood will rouse the flame
 To tenfold rage, whose fury will involve
 The palace and her king! But here, behold!
 The victim comes, from thine own lips, to hear
 Her sentence.

David. Save me, save me from her eyes
 They flash the vengeance of insulted Heaven.

Ach. Look on the vengeance of insulted Heaven!
intro- And think—will Heaven permit a form like this

ducing
Bath- To plead in vain—she flies to thee for refuge.
sheba.

[*Exit Achitophel.*]

David. Bathsheba! oh—was this a time to claim
 An interview? or art thou come to see
 The double triumph of thy fatal charms
 Over thy husband and thy King at once?

* Judges. c. 20.

He domineers below, and thou art come
 To charge me with your wrongs—is this an hour
 To add new aggravation to a load
 That bends me to the ground?

Bath.

Our shame and woe
 Are mutual, but, my Lord! you much mistake
 The purpose of my coming at this hour
 Of danger and distress! I know my guilt
 I feel what self-infliction wounds within,
 Yet still some inborn dignity remains,
 Yet undeprav'd, still some regard to truth
 And justice, which for ever locks my lips
 From charging on thy soul this fatal lapse
 (Fatal to me!)—I come to ease thy care
 And reason down the conflict in thy soul!

David. Then—I have drawn within the bounds of guilt

And cureless sorrow, this distinguish'd mind
 This generous spirit, which disdains to charge
 The cruel spoiler, with her deadly wrongs!—
 For this, Bathsheba! I was not prepar'd!—
 Rather pursue me with thy keen reproach
 Charge me with all the guilt! a manly mind
 Should have repell'd the foe, not sunk, like me
 To childish weakness! I was steel'd within
 But I flung off the armour of the mind
 Before the danger came!—

Bath.

It was surprize—
 A smother'd passion, by a sudden spark

Rais'd to a conflagration, which o'ercame
 All obstacles—that conquest o'er yourself
 When with a trembling hand, and bleeding heart
 You first resign'd me to your chosen friend :
 (Too well I mark'd, and never can forget
 Your pangs that moment, when you lost me first
 Resign'd me, like a martyr to your honour !)
 —That was a glorious tryal, whose desert
 Should sooth your present woes !—ah ! would to Heaven !
 Thy friend had caught the godlike zeal of friendship
 That warm'd thy bosom then ! I had not now
 Been doom'd to fate his vengeance with my blood
 He took th' advantage of a solemn vow
 By a stern father's will impos'd before
 And well—too well he knew, my father's will
 Was his sole claim !—he ne'er possess'd my heart—
 And when a nobler interest warm'd my breast,
 It was not like a foldier, nor a friend
 To seize th' unwilling hand !

David.

He was my friend

For me he risk'd his life, and, tho' to part
 From thee, was then a summons, like the stroke
 Of death, I own'd not then that selfish mind
 To rob my fellow-foldier and my friend
 Of such a gem, beyond the wealth of Kings
 To buy.—But pardon me—this language *now*
 Must be renounc'd for ever !

Bath.

Too, too well

I know the sad necessity. But hear
 At least a palliation of thy fault
 From her, who feels her own, nor fears to add
 A share of that, which, to yourself unjust
 You claim, a debt which Heaven too clearly sees
 Is due to me, and what my life must pay.—
 I blame not him, altho' it look'd like coldness
 That such a length of time unheeded past,
 And yet his spouse he claim'd not, from the hand
 Which first bestow'd her.—Did he seem to prize
 The present when it came? a few short months
 Had seen me wedded, when the trumpet's call
 Lur'd him from love and the soft lap of peace,
 Tho' no invasion shook our trembling bounds
 And our indulgent legislator's voice
 To the new-wedded pair had given a year
 Unvext by wars alarms!

David.

It prov'd at least

His love of fame and of his King's renown!

Bath. I too could give my life for Israel's cause,
 To purge the taint affronted pride disdains
 From his imperious mind, who slighted me
 Who flung me, like a worthless toy, away
 Nor thought it worth a lordly husband's pains
 To throw away a few neglected hours
 To gain a comfort's heart, too cold before!
 Yet to his vengeance I must pay my life,

Whose scorn the seeds of alienation sow'd
The source of all my woes ! yet this is well !
Since, ere suspicion singles out my Lord
The tomb shall close on me, and bury all—
Deep, deep below the busy fiend shall rest
Whose obloquy might reach the royal name
Did I survive !

David. And you—must you atone
—(Less guilty far,) for my more deadly crimes
It must not, shall not be!—

Bath. The law's demands
Must be obey'd—they claim a forfeit life.—

David. No palliation, no excuse allow'd
For one whose fatal fall, her spouses fault
Perhaps alone had caus'd?

Bath. So human laws
Ordain—perhaps in other worlds than this
In the great tribunal that sifts the heart
Distinction may be made between the tinge
Of guilt and weakness!

David. I, alas ! was chosen
Heaven's delegate (had I deserv'd the name,
This ne'er had been !) I ought—but now 'tis late—
To have display'd at once my sovereign power
To solve this dark enigma of your fate
But, self-involv'd in guilt, I durst not move
Left hissing scorn, and obloquy, combin'd
Should hurl me from the throne !

Bath.

Would Heaven, my doom
Were past ! then all would end, and peace return
To your perturbed spirit. [Going.

David.

Stay—oh Heaven !—
Must she submit to fate ? whose generous mind
Would hazard all for him, who caus'd her fall ?
It must not, cannot be !—Nature exclaims
Resistless, raging, in the cause of her
Who reigns in every pulse ! yet, go—send in [Ex. Bath.
Achitophel to me, his keen research
May find some specious means to reconcile
My fighting duties ! oh unhappy fall !
Other asylums I was us'd to find
In my distress, while I had trust in Heaven !
—I now must trust to man.

ENTER ACHITOPHEL.

David.

Achitophel !
Is there no port ! no refuge from this storm
That menaces so loud ?

Ach.

The storm is o'er
Uriah waits your orders to the camp
Ere morn he must depart !

David.

Why thus prevent
The dawn ?

Ach.

I know not, but conjecture lends
Her glimmering lamp that throws a dubious ray
On the dark purpose of the warrior's mind.

David.

Tell what you fear at once !

Ach.

In two days hence

The Judge of life and death ascends his seat

—This will afford him space to reach the camp

To fount revolt among his partizans

Then, with the expedition of a bolt

That, glancing from the shiver'd rock, o'erthrows

The blasted tree, his fiery-footed haste

Will chace his hapless consort to the grave!

David. Ha! is it so—it bears a dreadful form

Of something like the truth!

Ach.

Resolve, my Lord!

This is no time for pause! Bathsheba's doom

Is fixt already, past thy power to ward

If he returns.

David.

How know'st thou that? explain!—

Ach.

Too well—a friend of his has borne the scroll

To Zadoc.

David.

Prove it!

Ach.

Oh my Lord! is this

A time to search for proofs, or is my faith

No better known?—when he returns, the proofs

Will come in thunder, when redress is past!—

—Nay more, the malecontents, who lurk'd of late

In corners, meet in crowds, and waft the sound

Of clamorous obloquy from band to band,

Their slanders spare not even the royal name!

They only want a leader to assert

The baffled claims of Benjamin's proud race!

David. This is but rumour still !

Ach.

But I have proofs .

Authentic, strong,—I found the means to stop

The hasty messenger, till morning dawn

And gain'd the parchment.

[*Shews a Parchment.*

See ! 'tis sign'd and seal'd

Even with Uriah's hand—yet trust my word—

Such is the influence of thy haughty subject

Not in your camp alone, but in your courts

Even in your family, I found it hard

To gain the proof, and was compell'd to use

A statesman's art, where statesmens' power was vain !—

His partizans are numerous, mighty, proud

All friends of old democracy, and sworn

Under that venerable name, to rend

The sceptre from thy hand, or chuse a King

Subservient to their views, and close confin'd

Within their new-made limits.

David.

He, that gave

Can keep the sceptre mine ! but we must find

Some means to save the state.

Ach.

To save thyself

And all that's dear.

David

No mote—we must contrive

To fether headlong rage—nor risque our all

At jealousy's demand, or faction's frown,

The means shall be resolv'd upon within.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene—Another part of the Palace.

URIAH—ADRIEL.

Uri. And is it thus the King has learnt to treat
His early friends ? It was not so of old !
—Sent for in haste, exalted with vain hope
Of freedom from this tyrant of the camp
Whom now I serve—then !—what a deadly blank
For all the comforts of domestic joy
I felt at home '—the royal presence barr'd
By sycophants against the monarch's friends
Yet that were well ! but this unheard-of wrong !—
—What ?—am I grown a savage of the wild
To be thus baited by the last of men
The rabble of a court ?—

Adr. Compose your rage
And take your measures coolly !

Uri. I will find
A passage to the King, or lose myself,—
Soon shall I know, if he allows his friends
—The partners of his glory, to submit
To such a welcome !—were I call'd my friend !
Among my foes, like Sampson, to make sport
By my blind gambols ! I could bear it well—

—But, to be hoodwink'd thus among my friends
 Expos'd to all the ridicule and sneer
 Of scorers, who would tremble at my frown
 Were they to meet me in another field—
 —This is not to be borne!—thou too, my friend
 Contrivest to hold the veil upon my eyes
 And keep me blindfold here, among the rest!

Adr. Why dost thou stay then in this dangerous place
 Where, to provoke and sting thee into rage
 And make thee do some deed of lunacy
 To draw on thee perdition from the King
 Is all they wish for? They have mis'd their ends
 To lure thee to the snare, and now, they try
 To rouse thy rage, and drive thee to the toils—
 Art thou, like Sampson, blind amongst thy foes?—
 —Then, be a Sampson! pull the fabric down!
 And whelm them in the ruin.

Uri. Talk no more
 In riddles, but explain!

Adr. Thou seest the hand
 Of royalty, extended to protect
 The guilty—of thyself they meant to form
 An engine, a machine, to cloke their schemes,
 And sooth the tongue of obloquy to rest—
 —You 'scap'd the snare, and now, they doom you dead—
 —You ne'er will bear your life to Rabbah's camp—
 —But—if you stay
 Oh—there is noble vengeance yet in store!

Which not a single voice, nor single arm
 Can claim or execute.—Tell your wrongs loud
 In Israel's ear, and echo shall reply
 From every wood around, where freedom waits
 The word to start, and over hill and dale
 Pursue the noble chace till lawless power
 Forakes our happy bounds, and breathes her last.—

Uri. Thou hast indeed disclosed
 An unexpected scene!—and must I be
 Either an instrument of private guilt
 Or the blind tool of faction? am I made
 The trumpet of rebellion, or the flute
 That breathes soft peace thro' every royal room
 Of guilty courts?—at least, my sovereign Lord
 Will not deny me justice, which alone
 I seek for—but, my scandal to proclaim
 To blaze my wrongs before the noontide beam
 Is, what the honour of a soldier's name
 Or bosom, cannot brook!—and, must I give
 My breath to blow sedition's flame abroad
 And in sad triumph celebrate my wrongs,
 With flaming villages and bloody fields
 And devastation and ungovern'd rage?—
 No—let me do my duty, as becomes
 A soldier. I will ne'er be a machine
 Of the blind rabble's fury—if the shaft
 Of unseen death should meet me by the way
 Sent from my public or my private foes,

Vengeance is heaven's—and what on earth have I
Or to regret, or grieve!—

Adr.

That you mistake

My upright meaning, much afflicts thy friend!
—I could discover more!—but thy warm zeal
Perverts whate'er I say!—I much could wish
My doubts unfounded, but I fear for thee—
Consent at least to take a guard of friends
To bring you hence in safety to the camp
(If any sudden mandate should be given
To haste thy journey in the gloom of night)
For certain treason then shall dog thy heels—
But they shall guard you, and, perhaps, detect
Some mysteries yet untold, whose weight may turn
The scale for freedom in that dubious breast
And echo from her woodlands, shall repeat
Ten thousand fold, the soul-enliv'ning strain.

Uri.

No private wrongs shall make me lend my name
To public mischief—for the rest—my friends
I would not wish endanger'd for my sake—
The law shall right me! or farewell, revenge!

Adr.

No danger need be fear'd, but from yourself
If you too tamely bear such flagrant wrongs—
I'll tell you more, expect me here anon.

[*Ex. severally.*]

End of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

The Palace.

DAVID.

Not yet return'd! 'tis strange! they could not miss
 The track, nor would they linger in the chace!—
 —The morning dawns, but all is dark within.
 Ye solemn glooms! and thou still midnight hour
 Whence were your secret hoards of vengeance drawn
 That thus could fire my brain, and people night
 With forms, that made me wish for whisper'd tales
 Of ambuscades, of massacres, and blood
 To shake the kindling plague that burns within!
 —Perhaps they have deserted me, and join'd
 The foe! O coward reason! how you reel!—
 They have discover'd all, and he returns
 Returns, full fraught with vengeance, like a plague
 To breathe his venom round in every breast
 Till royalty expires, and David's name
 That us'd to fill the plausive shouts of thousands
 Is breath'd in execration, stamp'd with shame!
 I now repent the step, and wish recall'd

The messengers of mercy —never more
 Will he consent to pass those guilty gates
 Again ! perhaps, his rash, mistaken valour
 May deem them blood-hounds, meant to lure him back
 To certain fate, and stand on his defence !
 But they were far too numerous to be foil'd !—
 Or force or supplication must prevail —
 I should have kept him here ! my good resolves
 Are now the sport of chance ! for, if he 'scapes
 Not all the world can save him ! But, alas !
 Should he return, can I endure his look ?
 Can I endure to see his lovely spouse
 Thro' gazing multitudes led to her fate ?
 Ah no—tho' shame and ruin should ensue
 I would defy the law, profane the court
 And boldly rescue her, or lose myself !—
 He then must fall—for, should he now return
 What plea could I invent to screen my plot
 Of death against him ? He would still suspect
 The man, who once could give him up to fate !—
 I know his noble nature, he would scorn
 To hold his life on such precarious terms !
 Revenge and fear at once would urge him on
 To join the faction, and embroil the state !—
 Had I upon his loyalty rely'd !—
 I knew his nature noble and forgiving—
 But now, it is too late !—and, could I bear
 To lose her ?—never—never—tho' the voice

Of thunder, call'd her from me ! then farewell
Remorse ! farewell compunction—she is mine !
—But now my palpitating heart informs me
The crisis is at hand—my valiant friend.

ENTER BENAIAH.

Say, are the messengers return'd ?

Ben. Not yet

At least, not all.

David. Some dreadful chance, I fear
Has interven'd. What mean your dubious words
At least not all ?

Ben. A direful chance indeed !
The messenger that came, has scarce escap'd
With half a life !

David. What sad reverse is this !
How could he cope with odds ! or what bold arm
Was join'd with his ?

Ben. A numerous band of friends
Rous'd by some rumour of an ambuscade,
By Joab prepar'd against his threaten'd life
Triumphant led him thro' the opening gate
And tend him to the camp !—your messengers
Arriving at this moment, when surmise
Teem'd with intended murders, perfidy
And midnight plots—were deem'd the ruffian train
Combin'd to lay the noble warrior low ;
Then all was clamour and misgovern'd rage

In vain Uriah strove to lay the storm—
 Twice fifty level'd swords at once surround
 Your friends, who plead their innocence in vain
 One dar'd to menace vengeance, but the threat
 Was fatal to the wretch that gave it breath,
 His hapless fellows shar'd his bloody doom
 Save one, whom favouring night, (tho' wounded sore)
 Befriended in his flight, from him was learn'd
 The dreadful chance!

David.

Then to his doom he goes! —

Fate has him in the snare, and baffles all
 Our vain attempts to save him!
 O for a winged messenger of Heaven
 To reach the camp at Rabbah, and instill
 Unusual pity in the General's mind! —
 But they, whose ready ministry of old
 Turn'd from my hunted steps the deadly foe
 And render'd me as viewless as themselves
 Have all forsaken me—nor am I left
 Alone. Remorse and guilt, and death, and shame
 With dragon wing o'ershade me in their turns
 Their harpy clang severe, and funeral yell
 Proclaim perdition to my trembling soul!

* * * * *

Amazement! Nathan here! I thought him fled
 For ever from his country, to avoid
 The killing sight of an ungrateful child! —
 Him, last of all mankind I wish'd to meet!

What terrible tranquillity pervades
 His reverend mien and seems to threat a storm —
 Would that were all ! this deadly calm is worse
 Where nought but sense of Heaven's desertion lives !

TO HIM NATHAN.

David. Prophet, why didst thou thus forsake thy post
 Still deem'd the guardian of thy country's weal ?

Nath. The times are not the same ! those cares are o'er
 Domestic woes have quench'd the patriot's flame !
 No more my bosom kindles at the touch
 Of Heaven's descending fire ! the port is clos'd
 That show'd my ravish'd eyes the splendid view
 Of ages yet to come ! How soon the veil
 May rise, I know not ! what the sun beholds
 Those aged eyes can see, but boast no more
 The power to pierce the midnight-woven gloom
 In which the cause and consequence are hid ! —

David. This studied ambiguity implies

A meaning, which thy humble words disclaim !

Nath. When such unerring wisdom guides the helm
 Form'd like the diamond in the pregnant mine
 With that deep lustre fraught, those mingling beams
 Which angels love to gaze on ! when the soul
 Reflects Heaven's image like the limpid lake
 Smooth, and unruffled, by fell passion's gale ;
 A private man it much would misbecome
 To play the pilot, and usurp the helm

From such consummate guidance.—But for me
 No such ambitious folly taints my views
 Judge by my errand! on a private cause
 I come, a suppliant only—With the state
 And all its cares, I long have shaken hands,
 Content to introduce a poor man's plea
 To your indulgent ears—for well I know
 Tho' to the dangerous claim of passion deaf
 Tho' to the domineering proud appeal
 Of appetite, thou turn'st a heedless ear
 And look'st on sensual spells with cool regard
 Yet wilt thou not condemn the suppliant's prayer!

David. With the known rigour of thy stern rebuke
 Such lavish adulation ill accords—
 The humble topic of a poor man's plea
 Needs no such pompous prelude.—I suppos'd
 My known contempt of flattery might suggest
 (To thee at least) a manlier mode of speech
 Unless thy words and meaning are at strife.

Nath. I stand corrected, and shall err no more,
 Nor mingle with my rough uneven woof
 The tissue of the courtier's silken strain!
 It suits not with a plain, pathetic tale
 Of rural violence and village wrongs
 Which thy paternal care shall soon redress
 When known.
 When from the bounds of Salem late I past
 Self-exil'd, to avoid domestic woe

I thought in some sequester'd vale to find
 That peace and innocence devoid of guile
 Which (tho' thy bright example beams around)
 Even in those sacred bounds are sought in vain,
 A peasant's lodge I sought, whom long I knew
 Of Heaven so favour'd in his mean retreat
 So sanctify'd, that his æthereal guard
 Kept from his lonely cot, at distance due
 - All the vain Images, the gaudy train
 Of Syren forms (this world's peculiar boast)
 That lures the heedless votary from Heaven.

David. Could they not guard him from oppressive wrong?

Nath. They saw him wrong'd, and yet th' oppressor lives.

This hermit for my host I rather chose
 Than the proud owner of a neighb'ring pile
 Who kept his hospitable gate unclosed
 With ostentatious welcome to allure
 The way-worn pilgrim's foot —But here instead
 Of the long retinue, that fills the haunts
 Of luxury, and the unmeaning phrase
 Of hollow friendship, warm in words alone,
 One gentle lamb, his single inmate play'd
 About his joyous hearth and told a tale
 Of warm attachment in its honest looks
 And gentle bleatings, far beyond the phrase
 Of courtly adulation. This remain'd
 The solitary orphan of a flock
 Which fell contagion, or the fellor gripe

Of lawless usury had reft away
 The reft, or fill'd the concert of the vales
 Which own'd his wealthier neighbour for their Lord
 Or bled, by turns, the victims of his board.

David. That wealthy neighbour shall refund his store
 If aught of inhumanity appears
 Before the Judges tribunal—for soon
 It shall be closely sifted,—but proceed!—

Nath. A stranger, to the camp of Israel bound
 Of seeming rank, tho' hid in close disguise
 The proud man's hospitality had claim'd,
 He spar'd his numerous flocks, and sent his hinds
 To robb the hermit of his bleating friend
 The sole associate of his lonely hours.—
 I saw it borne away—I mark'd the tears
 Of its sad owner, all in vain they fell
 In vain, with supplications he pursued
 Even to the proud man's door his innocent charge
 His whole redress was insult, scorn, and blows.—

David. Now Heaven so deal with me, as he shall reap
 The bitter fruit of an unfeeling heart
 And with his forfeit life redeem the land
 From such a foul contagion! soon the world
 Shall know, I do not bear the sword in vain!

Nath. In thee, my Lord, whose pure, unsullied life
 Reflects a glowing transcript of Heaven's laws
 Such rigour is becoming, but to us
 Whose feeble optics boast no angel's ken

The sword of justice dazzles as it strikes—
 There needs not such gigantic force to venge
 Such petty wrongs.

You know, my Lord! how long the penal sword
 Has slumber'd in the sheath, and it might seem
 The rigour of severity, at once
 To wake its terrors now, for fame would tell
 That for a petty wrong, which might be paid
 Four fold, a soul was forfeit!

David.

Strange to me

It seems, that thou, whose eagle-sight could pry
 Beyond the journies of the sun, to view
 The late effect that slumber'd in its cause,
 Should be dim-sighted here! but time and grief
 Have shed a frost upon your faculties
 Else you would see, that famine, sword and fire
 With all the woes that on those furies wait
 Are not so pestilent as that still plague
 That cold, narcotic vapour, worst of ills
 With which hell teems, that last result of vice,
 When all the virtues, poison'd in their source,
 Stagnate at once, and petrify the heart.—
 Heaven's! what a journey with his fellow fiends
 Thro' every devious tract of every crime
 This man must first have run, who thus could tear
 The fellow-feelings from his savage heart!
 His soul is gangren'd, and the sword alone
 Can ward the vengeance stor'd above the sky

Which else, perhaps, would burst upon our heads
 In flaming ruin ; or the plague might catch
 From bosom on to bosom.—He, who dar'd
 To seize the lamb, would he have spar'd the child
 To join his servile train, or change for gold,
 As pride or caprice, or the thirst of gain
 Had chanc'd to domineer ?

Nath. Yes—or his spouse !

* *David.* Ha !

Nath. THOU ART THE MAN ! why does thy cheek turn pale
 At thy own semblance ? was the mask so foul
 As even to wake thy rage : and art thou dumb
 When thou behold'st the phantom's genuine face ?
 Thine own most righteous doom has past thy lips
 Without recall, and heaven has seal'd the word !
 To punish other crimes, were but to prune
 The wild luxuriance of a poisonous growth,
 While the pernicious root behind remains,
 Royal example !

David. Then thy flight was feign'd

after a And thou who seem'd degraded from thy post

long As Heaven's own delegate, by Heaven's own hand.

pause. With all thine honours blasted on thy brow,
 Return'st with tenfold power, and seem'st to wield
 The bolt of vengeance, but thy forward zeal
 May be th' effect of petulance ; the lamp
 Of Heav'n no more may show its light by thee ;

Perhaps, 'tis merely to indulge thy spleen,
That thus you dare to thwart me.

Nath.

Judge yourself,

When that fell adder, which you foster now,
Such gratitude will show, as you have shown
To Heaven ! My son's rebellion, and my flight,
Were mystic warnings to the mental eye
Of tragic scenes to come ! Of wild misrule,
And nameless horrors, even within those walls
To be committed. These will clear my faith,
And vindicate my name. But who, alas !
Who shall exculpate thee ? Thou who wast call'd
From a rude scene of turbulence and blood,
Like yon emerging sun from chaos old,
Th' interpreter of Heaven's benignant will
From thy bright station to revive the world
With intellectual light ! What demon's hand
Has chang'd thee to a comet, worse than they
Who wave their blazing tresses o'er the globe,
Shedding diseases and sidereal blast ?
Thou hast, as far as thou hast power, derang'd
The blest designs of Heaven, eclips'd her light
With deep Egyptian darkness, and reduc'd
Her order to confusion ! Thou hast given
A louder note to Passion's loudest storm,
And strengthen'd all her pleas ! For who that feels
Her mutinous demands, but well may plead
David's example for his worst offence ;
David, selected by applauding Heaven

Her delegate, her prophet, and her priest?—
 The faithful husband, of his spouse bereft,
 Heart-wounded fires, who mourn the cruel hand
 That robb'd his family of all its grace
 And comfort, lost at once, shall join to curse
 Thy mournful triumphs o'er connubial bliss,
 Shall curse thy name, whose magic syllables
 Breath'd, as a vile apology for crimes,
 Could, like a deep and powerful charm, compose
 The loud complaints of conscience!

David.

Oh, no more!

Thou rend'st my very heartstrings! I have sinn'd,
 Beyond redemption sinn'd. O send in haste
 To save Uriah.

Nath.

It is now too late.—

Even should thy messenger in time arrive,
 Should the swift mandate reach the general's hand
 It would but hasten brave Uriah's doom,
 Such is *his* deadly jealousy of all
 That share thy favour, thy solicitude
 To save him, would be thought a close design
 To hurl *him* from his post, by murder bought,
 And fix the hated rival in his room.—
 Even Providence ordains that he shall fall.
 Guilt must have all its dreadful consequence,
 No single plague of all its ghastly train
 Shall lag behind. The whole Tartarean pomp
 Shall march in horror o'er the frighted world,
 To shew the perils of beginning vice:

The dreadful admonition else were vain.—

Think not to save him ! Thou hast doom'd him dead,
And even Omnipotence has seal'd his fate.

David Is there no means to save him ?

Nath.

Do you doubt

My mission still ? This moment gives a proof
That makes me shudder, while a stronger power
Compells my trembling hand to rend the veil.
See there !

[Vision of a Man in a mask appears.]

A youth without a name ! He boasts thy blood.
Wrapt in unholy musings how he walks !
His eyeballs seek the dust, as if he fear'd
Each glance should tell the fires that burn within,
And soon the dust shall drink his boiling blood,
And vengeance quench the flame !—Stand close, and mark
His dire soliloquy ! Nor shalt thou learn
The object of his flame ! for Heaven's behest
Must not be stop'd or thwarted, else the close
Of vice, would want its horrors !—Here he comes.

THE PHANTOM SPEAKS.

Why was I form'd with such impetuous passions
Oh ill star'd lot of royalty, indulg'd
In every wish ! the fuel feeds the flame
Till raging past all bounds, it finds its way
Even to the sanctuary ! Ye chaste stars !
I must not name her to you ! Even my heart

Treacherous, and inconsistent, with itself
 At that lov'd name recoils !—yet urges on
 My feet to find my doom !—yet, why recoil ?
 No husband's forfeit blood I mean to shed,
 To meet him with a smile and, with a smile
 Dismiss him, with the mandate of his fate—
 I dare not reach the mark of * Heaven's-below'd
 My crime is short of murder, tho' beyond
 Common adultery ! and if Heaven connives
 At David's crimes, his complicated guilt,
 Why should I doubt of pardon, while my sin
 Is secret, nor involves the guilt of blood ?
 (If pardon be required, and right and wrong
 Perhaps, whatever priestcraft may devise—
 Be not the coinage of a statesman's dream)
 I'll think no more !—the genial feast invites
 I go to drown reflection in the bowl.

David. Who is this monster ? oh disclose his name
 By swift prevention to arrest the course
 Of such consummate crimes !

Nath. It cannot be—
 He boasts thy blood, and, as thou seest pursues
 Thy steps—you err'd from appetite alone,
 While he, improving on the royal crimes
 Turns passion into principle, but soon
 Vengeance shall cut him short, and lop away
 One deadly limb of that malignant plant
 Thy crimes have sown in Israel.

Viz. David.

David.

I adore

Heaven's ways, nor dare to deprecate her wrath!

Nath. But other scenes await thee.—Spectacles

Of wider horror, and more general plagues

When for one lawless deed, a nation mourns ;

And slaughter, fire, and devastation strides

From province into province, led to spoil

By vengeance, vengeance for a monarch's crimes,

Where pure religion and her votaries

Are banish'd from the clime by vice disgrac'd.

Arise ye tribes unborn ! ye future scenes

Distant, and indistinct in time and place

Behind the convex of the world conceal'd

And on the buoyant bosom of the air

Expand your figur'd pomp, and meet the eye !—

Far distant from those shores, a warlike race

That mark the wheels of the descending sun

Shall * see another luminary rise

On their benighted souls, from Salem sent,

From Hermon to Pyrenes distant bourne

Wide flushing o'er the sky. The savage tribe

Shall doff the bloody mail, and bathe their limbs

In pure baptismal waters, where the stream

Of Guadiana laves the fertile fields.—

Long shall their tribes enjoy the deep serene

Of rural blefs, beneath their Lords renown'd

* Conversion of the Spaniards to Christianity.

Of * Alemannia's old heroic race,
 Till peace induces luxury and vice,
 The court begins the example, taught by *thee*,
 (When thy prophetic eye, that us'd to pierce
 Thro' the long vistas of futurity,
 Forgot its visions, for th' unholy glance
 That led to deeds of darkness and of blood)
 The monarch † lets his eye at random rove
 After forbidden charms, forgets the tie
 Of hospitality, and leaves the fire
 To weep at home his violated child ;
 His tears are treasured up above ; they fill
 The vial of Heaven's vengeance, and come down
 In showers of wrath. The raging fire, mislead
 By the vindictive fiends, ascends the deck,
 And to his country's foes a suppliant bends !
 See where the reverend senior kneels before
 The misbeliever's throne, but not for peace,
 For mercy he implores not, but demands
 The congregated furies of the south,
 Fire, sword, and famine, to revenge his wrongs.
 See ! where they scowl across the midland main,
 And meditate their prey, and mount the wind !
 A living cloud of mischiefs, worse than those
 " Which Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
 " Brought up, and darken'd all the land of Nile."

* The Gothic Settlers in Spain.

* Roderic, the Goth, whose seduction of Count Julian's daughter, occasioned the invasion of Spain by the Moors.

The Vision of a Royal Court appears.

The King on his throne, and his Nobles attending.

ENTER A SUPPLIANT, AND KNEELS.

To thee, dread sovereign of an hundred thrones,
 Who sees the swarthy sons of Lybia bend
 Before thee, and canst bid their headlong zeal
 Sweep o'er the subject nations, or subside,
 Like the wild hurricanes that rage or sleep
 At the great bidding of the power who rules
 The kingdom of the winds : if ever zeal
 In thy great * prophet's cause thy fabre drew,
 If ere the wrongs of yon proud † Nazarenes
 Enflam'd your rage, oh ! seize the golden hour,
 That zeal and vengeance sanctify at once,
 Or sleep for ever ! Now the martial fife
 No more accords the measur'd march ; no more
 The trumpet's clang awakes the levied horde,
 But o'er the blasted laurels of their groves
 Vice curls her reptile tendrils, and consumes
 The vital sap, that nurs'd the vig'rous stem !—
 The king repays the hospitable rite
 With violence and wrong ! His nobles view
 His mad career in heartless apathy,
 Or join his deadly orgies ! What remains,

* Mahomet:

† Christians so called by the Sarazens.

But up—and give the victim to the sword.—
 Nature is burden'd with the hated race,
 And Heaven's own ministers, that ride the clouds,
 To all the winds proclaim the harvest ripe.
 Go borrow Time's keen scythe, and lend its edge
 To Devastation's hand; the reverend sire
 Will shake his hoary locks with joy to see
 His task of ages, in one glorious day
 Perform'd, then everlasting Righteousness
 Will look from Heav'n, and bless the rising flame
 That lays the temples of Gomorrah low!—
 Seek ye an hostage? take my life in pledge,
 If I should fail on yonder hated coast
 To give you ample means to plant your power
 And bid the Mauritanian stem extend
 Its boughs luxuriant o'er the conquer'd land!

King. Fathers! attend the summons! Heaven itself
 Calls us to conquest, and o'er haughty Spain
 Our prophet's name to raise, our hallow'd arms
 Are cover'd o'er with dust, and want a cause
 To furbish them anew. Shall narrow seas
 Oppose *their* march, whom Barca's burning sand
 Withheld not, burning fiercer in pursuit
 Of glory? think, for every added realm
 A double weight of glory waits above
 To every one, whose arms have lent their aid
 To this victorious cause*. Begin the vote.

* Viz. The cause of Mahomet.

*The Prospect changes to an invaded Country—Cities in Flames—
Peasants Massacred, &c. &c.*

Nath. Behold the fruit of thy luxurious hours,
The sequel of thy fond Elyfian dreams !
That King who dar'd to violate the laws
Of sacred hospitality and friendship
Bred in religion's pure and sacred rites
Had never dar'd to brave the flaming bolt,
Nor cope with Heaven's dread edict, hadst not thou
Marshall'd the way before ! contemplate now
The dreadful harvest which thy hand has sown
How far beyond thy hopes, and let thy heart
Weep blood, if yet the fount of tears be dry,
Uriah too might have embroil'd the state
And with rebellion's shrill sonorous trump
Publish'd his wrongs, and call'd the tribes to arms
But nobly he refus'd—thou little knowest
What a defender you have flung away,
If e'er sedition's flag shall crown thy towers,
If e'er the desert, thro' its lonely bounds
Shall joy to see its exiles steps return ! *
I see thine agony, and for relief
Of thy soul's torture, to another scene
Direct thy charmed eyes, thou hast beheld
The dark complexion of thy deeds outdone
By Heaven's profest disciple, blest with rays

* Viz. David, who afterwards was expelled from Jerusalem by his son Abfalom.

Of Heaven's peculiar brightness :—how he curst
 The beam, and like an adder slunk away
 To mingle with his kindred glooms, incens'd
 To feel the sacred light pervade his soul !
 Now view a warrior, whose benighted eyes
 Roll'd round in vain to find that heavenly ray
 Vouchsafed to that IBERIAN King,—whose lips
 The living waters from the hallow'd fount
 Never bedew'd, yet, (dubious as he stands
 Upon the trembling verge of life and death
 Whether the yawning grave shall close for ever
 His prospect, or the conscious mind survive
 To endless raptures, or incessant woes,) 2
 He minds not passion's call, he spurns away
 The snares of appetite that cross his path
 And court him to relax the stubborn nerve
 Of steel'd exertion, the seraphic forms
 Of GOOD and FAIR, altho by glimpses caught
 Hurry him thro' the phalanx of his foes
 And bid him scatter all their adverse bands
 Like fire, ascending thro' th' incumbent mass
 Of some embowel'd hill. It bursts abroad
 All glorious, and the cloudy face of night
 Paints with aspiring flame, and vollied hail
 Of mimic stars !

The Prospect changes to a Camp, Military Trophies, &c. The General seated as if to receive an Embassy.—A Train of Suppliants approaching at a distance.

Behold the noble youth
 Clad in the robe of conquest where he sits
 While all the breathing minstrelsie of war
 Sound his transcendent name from earth to heaven
 He minds them not !——
 Could you but see the conflict in his soul
 You still would tremble for him.—Such a form
 Has lighted up a fever in his blood
 That he seems something less, or more than man
 If aught, but death, or his warm wish enjoy'd
 Can work the cure ! Behold the matchless maid
 By vows another's—yet in person free—
 Then judge, and ponder, how a Gentile breast
 Can turn th' artillery of such charms aside.

David. Oh Heaven's ! all other mortal forms, to this
 Are fleeting vapours, unsubstantial air—
 Or beauty ne'er was seen by me before
 Or she surpasses all the beauteous kind—
 His virtue, if he can resign such charms
 Exceeds the human pitch.

Nath. You soon will judge
 He seeks not, for he knows not Heaven's support—

There be, who know its value and who seek it,
Then spurn it from them when they need it most.

THE GENERAL SPEAKS. *

O dear bought laurels! would to Heaven my fall
Had grac'd that fatal day on which, my shield
Guarded a father's head! He sleeps in peace
But, oh illustrious shade! if thou behold'st
The struggles of thy son, support his spirit.
If thou canst reach the source of heavenly light
Oh! steal one beam of intellectual day
And chase the demons who besiege the mind!
Tell me! oh tell me, do they whisper peace
Shall I obey them?—or, can I survive
The pangs of separation from the maid
Who lives in every nerve, in every pulse?—
Yet honour calls to leave her! should I scorn
The mandate? should I tear her from that heart †
That owns a mutual flame, could I survive
My honour? could I bear to hear my name
Traduce'd, and level'd with the common herd
The sport of every passion? I might teach
Her heart to swerve from duty! I might lure
Her yielding mind astray, by potent bribes
Of Roman dignity: but Roman honour
Forbids the thought. Let Punic souls obey
Each gust of passion! let majestic Rome

* Scipio Africanus.

† Viz. Her betrothed lover.

Subdue the world, by shewing how it can
 Subdue itself the first ! I must not taint
 My country's fame amongst barbarian tribes
 By tyranny, and rapine, tho' by laws
 Of conquest sanctify'd.—It must not be.—
 Suffer I must ! but let me feel for him
 Who, should I fail my passion to subdue
 Must sink beneath the pangs of hapless love !
 It must be conquer'd !—Rome's immortal cause,
 The common sympathy of man to man
 And reason, all demand it. But they come !—
 Be still my heart, and honour ! bear me thro' !—

[The Suppliants appear.]

Sons of Iberia ! let my present purpose
 Shew you, that, not by thirst of conquest led
 Nor universal sway, the Roman arms
 Have met th' insulting * foe of liberty
 Half way, in Spain, and drove him baffled home.
 It was, instead of violence and wrong
 To substitute the fair and equal ties
 Of steadfast equity and common faith.
 These, these alone the Romans wish to leave
 The trophies of their arms ! by these to rule
 And claim the empire o'er the willing heart !
 They scorn dominion o'er obsequious slaves
 Who tremble at the rod, and hold their being
 On the frail tenure of a despot's breath

* The Carthaginians.

They with their allies men, to rank with men,
 The children of one parent, justly deem'd
 The friends of Rome, and worthy of her cause,
 And I will purchase them with such a gem
 As the sun seldom views

[Goes into a Pavilion and returns with a young Princess,

Behold her here

Whom long as lost ye mourn'd ! I might have kept
 This treasure for myself, and shipt to Rome
 The glorious prize, nor fear'd the taint of blame,
 I might have still preserv'd the world's esteem
 But I had lost my own !—I found her heart
 Devoted to another, with that heart
 Her hand shall go ! and know, I more exult
 In this self-conquest, than, to climb the car
 Of triumph, o'er the whole assembled world
 With Carthage at their head ! To thee, brave Prince
 By love of right impell'd, this royal maid
 I freely give. Receive her as thine own
 And with it Rome's respect and warm esteem.

[Prosperus closes.

Nath. Ponder this scene ! then weigh with equal hand
 The Gentile, and Believer, then reflect
 Whence flow'd the continence of one, and whence
 That wild misrule that madden'd in the mind
 Of that misguided King, and woke the storm
 That wreck'd his country's peace, then ask yourself
 If meddling zeal inspir'd my just reproof. *[Exit Nathan,*

David. Was there not shame enough to sink my soul

In the dark gulph of absolute despair ?

But horror too and grief must add their weight ?—

Yet they are welcome !—cover me, deep night !

Ten thousand fathoms down, where never more

The blessed beam of Heaven shall visit me

Where never winged minister of her's

Thorough the dismal gloom shall wing his flight

To look on my sad fall, and turn away

With deep abhorrence !—but what midnight shade

Can hide me from myself ! What curtain fall

Between the piercing beam of torturing thought

And its sad object ? Yet, how gentle that

To what this instant I perceive within

This sense of desolation—Heavenly hate,

This dead vacuity, this gloom of being !

This settled sorrow of the swelling heart

By which alone I feel that I exist !—

Where shall I find him, where, the friendly power

Tho' arm'd with vengeance ? yet I wish to feel him

And own the father in his dread correction.

Father of mercy ! let me own once more

Thy presence, tho' it blast me ! turn again

Thy aspect, tho' incense, on thy fallen son,

And let me feel thy pity in the scourge

That wounds to heal !—far, far around I look

Amid the tossing of this mental storm

Yet see no dawning of that welcome light

Sign of returning peace ! it is but just
 That I should wander in eternal gloom
 For wilfully on heaven's benignant beam
 I shut my eyes, and chose to grope my way
 To swift perdition with a demon guide.

TO HIM, ZADOK.

From him, whom never yet desponding soul
 Address'd in vain, I come, but not with peace
 Nor soothing promise, long the storm must rage
 The dashing rain descend, and deluge spread
 Ere with the olive branch the dove returns
 Thy soul has lost its vigour—all its powers
 Are run to waste, its energy is gone—
 Extinct, by foul voluptuous charms exhal'd
 This to recover, needs strong discipline
 Effective, lasting, till its energy
 Recovers in the conflict, like the spark
 From stricken steel, or winter's fire, compress'd
 To tenfold ardour by the rigorous grasp
 Of winter's frosty hand — This is Heaven's will
 Her primal law, by most effectual means
 To keep that sacred, active power awake
 In which th' excellency of mind consists
 If this be dissipated in the calm
 Of sensual life, or if, in sloth relaxt
 The faculties lye slumb'ring—then he calls
 His ministers—fierce pain, the alarm of war

Domestic grief, adversity's stern march
 And quiver'd woes. They rouse the torpid mind
 Hunt her thro' all her feelings, till she rise
 From her terrene and most inglorious laire
 And Heaven-ward looks again, asserts her birth,
 Puts forth her pinions, vindicates the skies
 And leaves the worldly dim eclipse behind,
 But, if those fail, the gangrene is begun
 That leads to swift perdition.

David.

Heaven forbid

Such means should fail ! Oh let the discipline
 Be sharp enough ! I shrink not, tho' it leave
 My trembling nerves all bare ! welcome ! affliction
 I bless your friendly frowns, to my sick soul
 More chearing than the Syren smiles that led
 My wand'ring feet astray. Your awful march
 And funeral ensigns, seen afar, I hail !
 Print not your footsteps lightly in the dust
 For every vagrant gale to waft away
 The traces of your visitation dread !
 But leave a deep, indelible path behind
 As when the avenger of his people's sins
 Treads the red wine-press in his jealous rage
 And stamps his vengeance deep—but me alone
 Visit, nor let my people share my woes !

F I N I S.

POSTSCRIPT
TO THE
DRAMATIC POEM
OF THE
ROYAL MESSAGE.

THE introduction of the character of popular delegates in the foregoing drama is founded on the representation of the Jewish government, as given by HARRINGTON and others. According to them, though it was first a theocracy, (or a government, immediately under the divine legislature) the laws, were however, submitted to the people for their adoption or rejection. By this is not meant that they were submitted to the people at large. but to chosen delegates elected * in rotation.

In proportion as they degenerated, and, in consequence, forfeited in in some degree, the divine protection, the theocracy became a mere republic. This form of government, though extolled by Harrington and his followers, yet seems, even in the case of the Israelites (which he adduces, as one of the most convincing examples in its favour) to have laboured under one considerable defect. Under this latter change at least, the EXECUTIVE power was so feeble, that a Monarchy was become absolutely necessary for their subsistence as a society, for as † *there*

* Judges, 21. 2.

† See I Chron, 13. and Harrington, in loco.

was no King in Israel, every one did that which was right in his own eyes; this is an observation made by the sacred historian after the account of a very flagrant outrage, which was punished indeed, tho' not by the hand of the Magistrate, but by a bloody war and almost the total extermination of the obnoxious tribe.

The friends of the Republican form of Government cannot, therefore make any inference in favour of that system, from the example of the Jewish Common-Wealth, unless indeed they can shew, that when they were properly a Republic, the laws were regularly put in execution. Arguments drawn from their anterior state, as a theocracy when they were immediately governed by the dictates of Omnipotence, and entitled to his favour, are foreign to the question. In this *degenerate* state therefore a royal Governor seems to have been necessary, in order to preserve them as a nation, from anarchy. The objection made by SAMUEL * to a Kingly Government is, I know, sometimes adduced, as an argument against the Monarchical form. But it appears, not that SAMUEL preferred the Republican, but the Theocratical form of Government to the Monarchical. Indeed, that ever they were what is called a pure Commonwealth, seems a supposition of Republican writers, ingeniously, but infirmly supported. The design of their ancient prophet seems to have been, to reclaim them to their ancient obedience, in order to entitle them once more to that degree of the divine protection which they had forfeited. If they ever were a Republic, it was found that they could not subsist as one; their Government was therefore changed into something like a limited Monarchy: at least, it appears that some new laws, or regulations were, from time to time proposed to the delegates of the people, † in the rejection of Adonijah, and the election of Solomon, the business was certainly carried by the popular vote, as under the old Theocracy.

It is natural to suppose that in this stage, a sufficient portion of the old popular spirit would remain to make the people, or their delegates, watchful over their privileges, and jealous of the royal prerogative. At the coincidence of a bloody foreign war, with great relaxation of morals in the court, and a flagrant example of criminality in the Monarch, the popular faction would have (as they thought) a plausible pretext for innovation, or probably for restoring the ancient royal family. The existence of such a faction is proved from sacred history, and its progress and fortunes described at large †.

* Chron. 29. 22.

† 2 Sam. 20.

The author, however, of the foregoing drama, does not presume to decide on what form of Government was adopted by the Jews in their transition from a Theocracy to Monarchy, as the point has been much disputed: the authorities produced by both sides, and the points they agree in, seem a sufficient basis for such a slight, poetical superstructure, as he has ventured to erect. To the generality of readers, he hopes, he need not apologize for an amplification of the story of Uriah; the best apology he perhaps can make is, that the subject was recommended to him by a gentleman of distinguished genius and taste * whose liberality in encouraging others to enter on the same paths he has pursued himself, with so much success, is as uncommon as his abilities. The story itself must be owned to be highly instructive and interesting. The author imagined it might be rendered still more so, by endeavouring to mark the commencement and trace the progress of guilt in the principal character, and to bring into view some of its consequences, within such limits as the unity of the subject would admit. How far he has succeeded in the conduct, the sentiments, and delineation of character, is not for him to determine. It is not the intention however, of the author to let it rest under the load of imputations that are not justly due.—It has imperfections enough of its own to answer for. It is necessary, therefore, that he should account for the following sentiments in the character of ACHITOPHEL, which at first sight, seem highly objectionable. Where he is introduced as pleading to David the necessity of Uriah's death, from reasons of state, he adds the following argument:

† Dost thou not wish the obstacle removed
By any safe expedient?—search thy heart!
—Examine well within!—I know thou dost!—
But Heaven, that marks the movements of the mind,
In equal balance weighs the guilty thought
And guilty deed. Already is thy soul
Deep-ting'd with blood in Heaven's impartial eye
And sentence past already! What remains
But give th' imperial mandate—And it's o'er?
One act of penitence atones for all, &c.

This was introduced with a design of exposing a sophistical argument which has often, it is to be feared, afforded something like a tacit patronage to vice.

* WILLIAM PRESTON, Esq.

† Act 4. Scene 3.

Of this doctrine, that the criminal *intention* and the *deed* itself are equally culpable, advantage has been taken by the libertine in private, and more openly by a certain species of fanatics; the former pleads it to himself, to palliate his enormities, the others make public use of it in order to support their peculiar dogmas. The first pleads as an excuse for his licentiousness, the infirmity of human nature, the others assert, that man has come out of the hands of his maker, or has made himself so complete an adept in depravity, a machine so skilfully wound up for mischief, that he cannot endeavour to assist his neighbour but he offends his maker, that his very best actions entitle him to celestial vengeance; that when conscience approves his seeming good actions, it is guilty of a pernicious fraud, for good works *as such* entitle a person to *damnation*! * This, 'tis true, puts an end at once to all moral distinctions, and that old, exploded doctrine of the rule of right, and the unalterable fitness of things, concerning which Clarke and Cudworth have given themselves so much useless trouble. But it tends to promote the more commodious doctrine of salvation by faith alone, supernatural assurances of election or adoption, a much more comfortable opinion than that old troublesome notion of the necessity of a thorough reformation in heart and life!

An inattentive perusal of a declaration of our Saviour's in the Sermon on the Mount, has given to some a seeming sanction to this opinion, *that the intent and act are equally culpable*, the words are well known, "*whoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*" It is observable that the guilt is not mentioned in general, but the degree of it is ascertained with a mathematical accuracy, (if one may be allowed the expression) by the very words *in the heart*. ---These undoubtedly were meant to distinguish it as inferior to guilt

* See Wesley's last Sermon, with Mr. Vickars's Remarks. —This doctrine seems to have arisen (for it is not novel) from a misconception of a passage in Thomas Aquinas, where that acute schoolman enumerates, with scientific precision, the several ingredients of a good action, any of which being detracted, the action changes its nature of course. See a debate on this subject, in Father Paul's History of the Council of Trent, B. 2.

in *act*. This interpretation seems supported by that remarkable expression in another part of the gospel, *out of the heart proceed adulteries, murders, &c.* This expression set in contradistinction to the former seems to indicate a superior degree of guilt. The communication of moral contagion to the mind of another, must even in the eye of reason, be a mere flagrant enormity, at least, it must be more pernicious to society than a criminal propensity, which is confined to a solitary bosom, and makes a progress, visible only to the eye of Omnipotence.

The solemnity with which the great author of our religion points out the turpitude of the first criminal conception, may seem too great for the occasion---but the expression he uses does not denote a transient temptation but the guilt of one, who deliberately, and contrary to his known duty, takes his station in the precincts of danger, * and fixes his mind intensely on the forbidden object. To those who credit revelation, and are conscious that the indulgence of criminal propensities render us objects of aversion to superior rational beings, the representation in the text will carry sufficient conviction. To such as consider the dangerous encroachment of the passions, and the misery they occasion, when reason relaxes its government, the caution will appear highly necessary. The philosopher, who examines only the intellectual and active powers of the mind, will allow the danger of such indulgences, even when confined to thought, when he considers their baneful influence on the reasoning powers. One of the principal duties of man as a rational creature, is, to exercise his judgment, to weigh things present, with things to come, to look beyond the object that solicits his immediate attention, to its remote consequences, and determine as reason directs. By this exercise his rational powers attain a daily addition of strength and activity. Imagination cannot at present, form any adequate notion of that comprehension of mind, which probably, in a future state of existence, will be the result of an habitual exercise and improvement of *this* faculty, suppose we at present take no more of human nature into our view. The self-command, which must necessarily be the concomitant of such an exertion, must give the intellectual faculty additional strength in every stage of its progress.

Let us now reverse the telescope, and figure to ourselves in what a mean and degrading point of view a rational being must appear to superior natures, when it suffers its faculties not only to be clouded

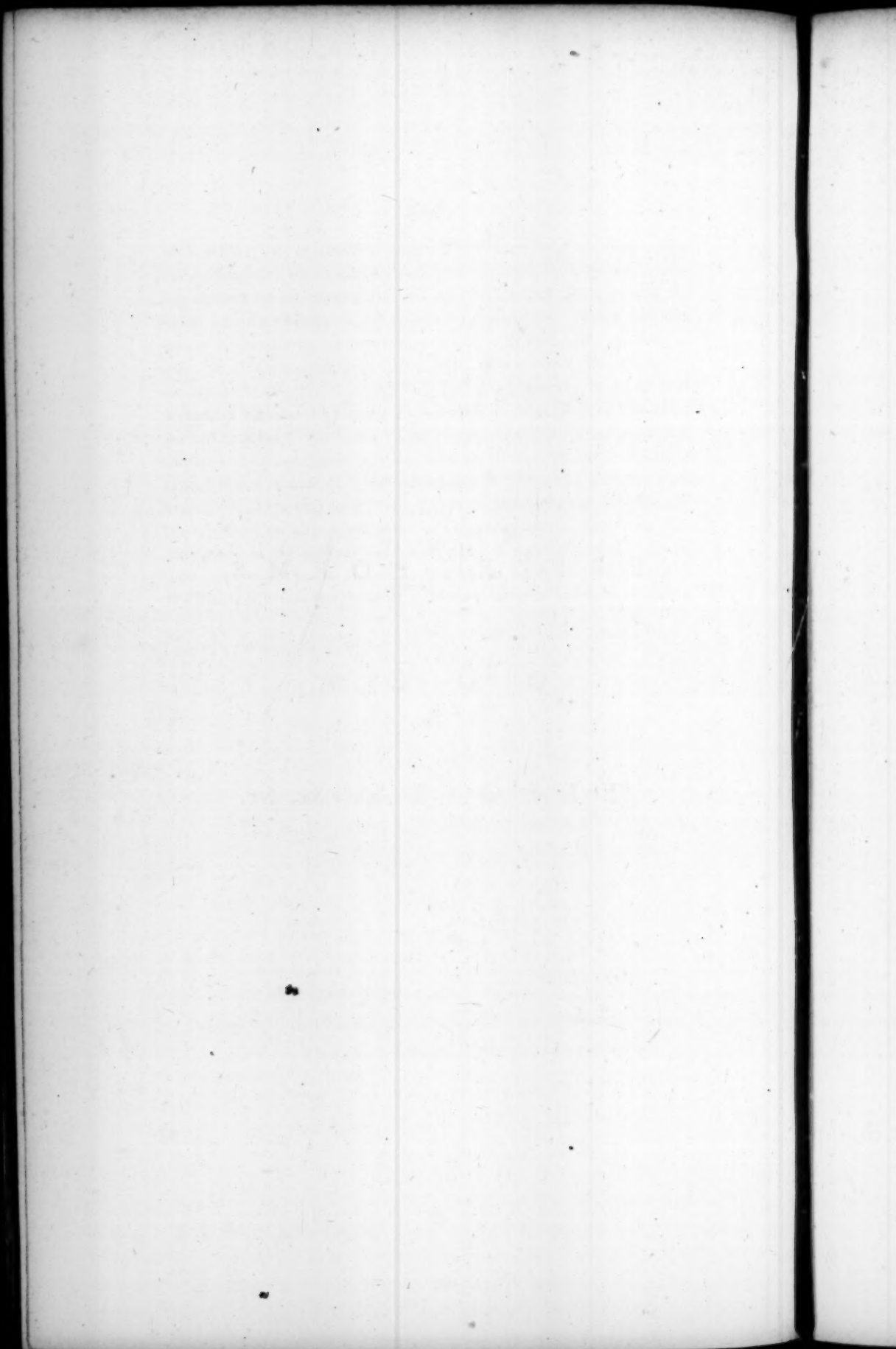
* *Blasphemy* looketh upon with continued attention.

with passion, but contracted, enfeebled and perverted from their original destination!—Such a mind must have lost even the power of exerting its first operation over its own notions. It cannot appreciate the value of such objects as fall under its observation. It has lost the power of comparing its own ideas, for it is so inviolably attached to *one*, that it cannot carry its view so far, as to contemplate another in a comparative view. It is not easily conceived how the range of such a person's ideas can be much more extensive than those of the mere animal creation. Yet to such a deplorable state even of the reasoning faculties, the indulgence of any one inordinate desire unavoidably tends, if not controlled in due season.—With time, the difficulty must increase in proportion to the necessity of recovering what one may call the elasticity of the mind, and, of repelling at the same time the insurgence of the passions.—So just, even in a philosophical point of view, is our Saviour's representation of the turpitude and danger of the first, deliberate reception of a criminal train of thought.

P R I Z E P O E M S,

O D E S,

E L E G I E S, &c. &c.



HYMN TO SILENCE,

THE

PRIZE POEM

FOR THE

YEAR ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND SEVENTY
FIVE, T. C. D.

THY genial influence in the lonely hour
I hail, O sacred SILENCE! lo, the muse
In thy kind lap matur'd, now grateful pays
Her song of retribution! May it flow
With unoffending softness to thine ear!—
No more let discord, thy rude foe of old
With inroad wild and desolating hand
The measur'd descant mar! forbid his feet
Bland goddess! from that hallowed haunt, where late
My ravish'd eyes thy hermit steps beheld
Tracing the lawn at eve, while all around
The marshall'd dew obey'd thy potent rod
With soft invasion o'er the fairy scene

F f

Stealing, and Night, thine ancient lov'd compeer
 Pleas'd thy dominion saw ! Oh thou most lov'd
 Of all the pensive nymphs ! vouchsafe once more
 That theme, which with an energy, divine
 Above aught vocal, thine enchanting power
 Did late impart ! For to the arduous task
 Of perfect recollection THOU alone
 Art equal. By thy kind conducting hand
 Weak Memory led, unravels all the path
 Where late she trode bewilder'd, whilst thy veil
 Excludes th' annoyance of a busy world !
 Or, if this great boon be deny'd, permit
 The mighty spirit of some Memphian sage
 Who tended erst thy temple on the shores
 Of Nile, and now, perhaps, with wonted guard
 Watches thy midnight throne, distinct and loud
 To chant thine awful legend. Let him tell
 How, tendant on the deity, you rode
 Far into chaos, and, with potent charm
 (Felt thro' his stormy confines,) still'd the roar
 Of fighting elements confus'd, and woke
 ORDER, at last, with thy soft touch, the foe
 Of the old Anarch, whom in viewless chains
 He held so long beneath th' oblivious pool,
 Ten thousand fathom down. For this, of old
 In less degenerate times, thy deity
 With fanes was honour'd, and the mystic pomp
 Of ceremonies, by no ruffian noise

Unhallowed, and thy gracious recompense
 Let him not leave unsung. How on the hour
 The genial hour of vacant revelry
 * An unremitting guard thou fatest, nor oft
 Did the quick fall of ungovern'd joy
 Or vagrant shaft of keen, corroding wit
 Escape the sacred door, to scatter wide
 The seeds of future rancour and affray,
 † Then bid his notes swell with the Samian sage
 Pythagoras, and his school of old renown
 Where the green years of tender youth unform'd
 Heavenly Instructress! pass'd beneath thy sway
 Great Queen of Silence, thine was all the train
 Whose converse by the quick, alternate glance
 Was shot from soul to soul, disdaining use
 Of clamorous organ, till, mature and full,
 Nurtur'd by thee, at length, they deign'd to ope
 The treasures, hoarded in thy golden reign
 And bless, with speech a long expecting world.
 But, in a gloomy and degenerate age
 When Virtue, by her long exerted task
 Fatigued, and downward menacing, at last
 To superstition sunk, inglorious then

* The laws of the Symposium, among the ancients, which subjected the person to infamy who disclosed the conversation that passed at their banquets.

† The silence of the school of Pythagoras is well known, which his pupils were obliged to observe during the first five years.

And deep degrading was thy sad employ,
 To watch in convents dim the leaden look
 Of barren contemplation, or the hand
 Tracing a spiritless detail of facts
 Misnamed HISTORY, and oft THY guise
 By sacrilegious dullness was usurp'd
 In hooded majesty, to spread an awe
 O'er the unthinking crowd, misled with ease
 By semblance vain of cogitation deep.
 YET not unuseful was thy steady care
 Even then.—That power omniscient (who surveys
 The gradual forming of the human race
 From savage to refin'd,) ON THEE bestow'd
 An office of high import, to preserve
 Those nobler monuments that bore the stamp
 Of wisdom, by a length of years sublim'd
 Far, far secluded from the scrutiny
 Of eyes profane, and apprehension's rude
 Left, madd'ning with the strong ideas, thence
 Imbib'd, their zeal, all immature and wild
 Should prompt them to disdain their lowly plight
 * And, aiming at perfection, idly mar
 The certain, slow procedure of that hand
 Which, with improvement, joins stability.

* During the middle ages, the more valuable remains of ancient writings were generally unknown, or despised; the final cause of which seems to have been what is mentioned above, viz. the prevention of *premature* innovation.

BUT, some, of spirit more inquisitive
 And restless, daring with unlicens'd eye
 Thy yet forbidden treasures to profane
 Quickly, with more than TELAMONIAN strength -
 DULNESS, thy new ally, step'd forth, and wide
 Display'd her deadly Medusean shield
 A mirrour, by a necromancer's art
 With a strange, fascinating power replete.
 BY THIS the forms august of ancient times
 Illum'd, all sudden, as by some foul blast
 They seem'd to lose each fair primæval grace
 And all appear'd a rude and shapeless mass
 Unlovely to the quick, disdainful eye
 Of disappointed Fancy. Hence arose
 That cold contempt for every noble form
 Delineated there by hands divine *.
 BUT the Saturnian period saw, at last
 Thy gates flung open by the scept'red hand †
 And all the ARTS, in order, issuing forth
 Like the first rosy progress of the morn
 From chaos, when the new-made planet rose
 And at their head, with port of eminence
 In pristine bloom renew'd, fair POETRY

* It was a common practice of the Monks, in the dark ages, to erase from an old manuscript, a decad of Livy, or an oration of Cicero, and supply its place with some Saint's legend, or the decretals, when the materials for writing were difficult to be procured; hence many ancient books were lost. *Mem. Petrarque.*

† Revival of the arts under Leo the Tenth.

Like Hermes, to prepare the nations rude
 By soft'ning strains to take a nobler form.
 HAIL ! nurse of holy Contemplation ! hail
 Mother of Science, thee the pensive sage
 In moral musings as absorpt he sits
 Darkling, invites to heal the mental flaws
 Caus'd by th' invading passions of the day !
 And much thou canst ! for thine is Reason cool
 Thine is RESOLVE. To thee, fair virtue owes
 Her soarings most sublime—Thou, and the night
 Alone were conscious, when the MORAL FIELD
 Was by the magic hand of Socrates
 Fenc'd with a mound of Amaranthine green
 Thou saw'st in NEWTON'S mind, the figur'd world
 Arise, in fair idea. Thine are all
 The secrets, to our prison'd faculties
 Denied. O virgin of the modest lip !
 All unelate with learned pride, thou know'st
 The freight of those rich squadrons of the sky
 That steer their golden voyage overhead,
 And the nocturnal Heaven with glory fill !
 DESCENDING *here*, thy wounded ear imbibes
 The lonely voice of Sorrow, and the sigh
 Of love-lorn youths and maids, with the deep groan
 Of him, fore smitten by the midnight hand
 Of Conscience, who his bosom's gem has sold
 For pomp untasted, riches unenjoy'd !
 Goddess ! I see thee hang the pensive head

Deploring, as thou bendeſt to behold
 How he broods over his eternal wound !
 THENCE, borne on wing obſcure, the ſullen growth
 Of lurid rancour thou art bound to mark
 Yet Deſtiny's eternal law forbids
 One hint the death-devoted wretch to ſave.
 STILL doom'd to watch, thou hear'ſt with dread alarm
 The ruthleſs, deep, repeated ſtroke of time
 Mining the mundane wall. Thou hear'ſt beneath
 The fiery deluge as it ebbs and flows
 Forming new dungeons in the ſolid globe
 Conſiſting to and fro ; and ſending oft
 Th' giant warnings to the trembling world.
 Not deſtin'd yet to burſt abroad in rage
 Till the laſt trumpet blows the ſolemn knell
 Of ſad viciffitude, depos'd, and led
 Captive, to grace the long, majeſtic pomp
 Of CONSUMMATION, on her burning throne.

F I N I S.

THE
GENIUS OF THE WHITE ROSE,

THE
PRIZE POEM

FOR THE
YEAR ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND
SEVENTY-SIX.

The subject of this piece is the resignation of RICHARD Duke of YORK,
to his uncle the Duke of Glo'ter, by his mother. It opens with a
soliloquy of the Genius of the YORK family, on the morning of
EDWARD the Fifth's supposed coronation.

THE

GENIUS OF THE WHITE ROSE.

" ON this glad scene what mortal change impends?
Why mourns the pomp along the public way?
What fun'ral gloom its baleful shadow sends
To blast the hopes of this distinguish'd day?

" And see! amid yon venerable train,
Rank after rank, that form the moving state,
Two spectres dim the herald's garb profane,
And marshal *Edward* to the field of fate!

" Half sunk, and deadly pale, the royal boy,
The sick plume trembling o'er his faded brow,
Seems to recoil from the tumultuous joy,
And mourns the boon the wayward fates bestow.

" The fraudful pomp the stern Vicegerent leads,
 Cov'ring his deep deceit in fair disguise ;
 And tho' the sov'reign call of nature pleads,
 The cruel victor scorns her potent voice."

" May not a solitary life suffice ?
 Still further shall the waste of carnage spread !
 And must the sovereign stem be wounded twice,
 And twice the royal blood by ruffians shed ?"

" It must—for lo ! another hand unseen,
 With veil funereal shrowds the awful dome,
 Where, with her younger hope, the widow'd queen
 Claims the protection of a sacred home."

" Less doubtful still and deadlier signs ensue :
 Lo ! severing in the midst, the cloudy veil
 Leaves to the sun, in broad portentous view,
 A * window, fraught with that disastrous tale :"

" How jealous Ire in infant blood was dy'd,
 And all the Jewish tyrant's † fruitless rage ;
 When, waging war with Heaven, he vainly try'd
 To quell the glory of the rising age."

" The *holy infant* soon a refuge found ;
 Soon was his mighty father's arm display'd :

* Painted glass—supposed in Westminster Abbey.

† Herod.

But thee, fair branch of *Edward's* stem-renown'd,
 Ev'n in those sacred walls shall fate invade !"

" And see ! Heav'n's omens aid the sign beneath !
 See ! beaming on the *twins* an influence dire !
 The warrior planet looks debate and death,
 And wayward *Saturn* joins his fullen fire !

" 'Tis done—my charge for ever I resign !—
 But what avails the various fields of blood ?
 The many triumphs of the mighty line ?
 The combinations by their arms withstood ?

" Ah ! race renown'd in vain ! in vain elate
 With many a trophy won by matchless might !
 If by thine own fell hand, the pow'r of fate
 Sinks thy prond glories in eternal night !"

Thus mourn'd the *Genius* of the *PALER ROSE*,
 As hov'ring o'er the pompous, deep array,
 He saw young *Edward*, by his deadly foes,
 Led to his fate, a dumb defenceless prey.

Sorrowing, he saw his tender pupillage
 Their blooming hopes to early fate resign :
 When, his fast-rising anguish to assuage,
 Appear'd the genius of th' ascending line.

" Behold me sent," he said, " to clear away
 The ominous night that clouds thy hopes and thee ;
 And end the feuds of many a bloody day,
 When civil discord rag'd from sea to sea.

“ Mourn not the royal boy’s untimely doom ;
 But hear the dread designs of fovereign fate ;
 Who, provident of ages yet to come,
 Ends the mad tumults of the guilty great.

“ The blooming males of Edward’s regal brood,
 Each in his turn to destiny shall yield ;
 That Mars no more may keep the isle in blood,
 Nor Discord wave her flag in ev’ry field.

“ Long by her cruel uncle woo’d in vain,
 The virgin heirefs of the royal line ;
 Shall see young RICHMOND cross the Gallic main,
 And on one stem the *mingled roses* join.

“ See ! where on *Bosworth’s* plain the victor tow’rs ;
 The battle swerves beneath his proud controul :
 And see ! th’ usurper hem’d by hostile pow’rs :
 How he breathes out his fell, indignant soul !

“ Nor thou, intent on partial views, repine
 The triumphs of a rival to survey
 See ! where in one their mingled glories join,
 And golden years succeed the dreadful day ?

“ Mean while, obedient to the stern commands
 Of fate, I go to claim the younger born
 Of Edward, from his weeping mother’s hands,
 The widow’d Queen, of ev’ry hope forlorn !

“ With bloody meaning to invade those bounds,
 Where hov’ring angels tremble as they gaze,
 Me, tho’ no mortal born, with pity wounds,
 And the firm purpose of my soul betrays.”

This said, in semblance of a prelate hoar,
 The great upholder of the *Cestrian* state,
 Approach’d, with fatal speed, the sacred door,
 And enter’d, where the royal mother fate.

With reverence meek, began the seeming faint
 “ Hail ! royal mother of a mighty line,
 So may kind Heav’n your last petition grant,
 As you with gentle heart accord to mine !”

“ By me Heav’n claims the royal, guiltless child,
 Souls pure as *his* no low asylum need :
 Meet are those walls to screen the blood-defil’d,
 Not him who never knew unholy deed.”

“ Here, brooding over his eternal wounds,
 Let the sad felon his lone hours employ ;
 But never be it said, those hallow’d bounds
 From fancy’d evil screen’d a blameless boy.

“ Shall every fear of wayward fancy’s brood
 Give to this mansion a desponding guest ?
 Shall sacrilegious passions here intrude,
 And break upon the temple’s holy rest ?

“ Shall guilt and innocence promiscuous here
Find an asylum? Hence the thought profane!
Shall each alike the garb of penance wear,
And pious fraud the holy presence stain;

“ Here let remorse and sorrow wake to weep,
And purge their stains with penitential tears;
But let not hate her sullen sabbath keep;
Nor quint suspicion tell her fancy'd fears!”

“ Ask him who sent thee if my fears be true,
(With royal scorn the lonely Queen reply'd);
Ask him who *Pomfret's* deadly secret knew,
Why her sad streets with noble blood were dy'd?

“ Ask him, who with his ruffians holds in awe
My son, yet mocks him with a royal name?
And, while his fell assassins o'er him draw
Their snares, deep lulls him in a golden dream.

“ Yes! let that artful tyrant tell with pride,
How o'er the church he stretch'd his iron rod,
And bade her sons in him alone confide,
Daring with dreadless front to mock their God.

“ That God, who bids a mother's trembling heart
Outreason all the fages learned pride;
Bids nature drown the feeble voice of art,
And menac'd lives from *real* dangers hide.

" But what avails a mother's trembling heart ?

Ah ! what avails a mother's feeble pow'r ?

I see the close approach of mard'rous art,

I see, alas ! my Richard's fatal hour !"

" Yet with my son I'll meet the stroke of fate !

Together will we meet the tyrant's frown !

Our fall will raise his savage pride elate,

And all his cruel machinations crown."

" And yet, ev'n yet, I'll trust the bounteous pow'r,

That rais'd me humble to a royal bed ;

That o'er my child, in this disastrous hour,

His kind paternal arm shall still be spread."

" Trust in him still," the mitred form reply'd ;

" Trust him for better seasons to ensue :

His messenger, I bid thy fears subside,

And open fairer prospects to thy view."

" Not *Gloster's* vassal I, nor his command

Sways me this holy task to undergo :

Accept a pledge of faith, this spotless hand ;

I come to his designs a deadly foe."

" I come to save thy son ! for hov'ring nigh

The tyrant's guards, on some black errand bent,

Seem to regard those walls with savage eye :

Then haste ! fair mourner ! and thy foes prevent !"

“ Full little would those walls ”—He scarce had said :
The trumpet blew the loud concerted sign.
“ Oh ! save my son ! ” exclaim’d the Queen dismay’d,
“ They come ! Oh ! save the last of EDWARD’S line ! ”

She spoke : and, swooning, fell a lifeless corse ;
In dark oblivion long entranc’d she lay :
And when her vital pow’rs resum’d their force,
The victor’s hand had borne the Prince away.

W O O D S T O C K.

THE

P R I Z E P O E M

FOR THE

YEAR ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND
SEVENTY-SEVEN.

The scene of the following little piece is laid at Woodstock,
during the captivity of *Elizabeth*, who was confined there by
her sister Queen MARY.

W O O D S T O C K.

YE lonely shades, where Rosamond allur'd
Her Henry's steps from Glory's paths to stray;
Where, in the roseate bow'r of bliss immur'd,
Reckless, he saw his laurel'd pride decay.

How brook'd the genius of yon solemn grove,
His ancient haunts by lawless love profan'd?
Disdain'd not his pure feet those lawns to rove,
Till late the * lyre once more his presence gain'd!

His magic lyre the mighty minstrel ply'd;
The list'ning Dryads to their haunts return'd:
A fresher verdure cloath'd the prospect wide,
And brighter hues the flow'ry banks adorn'd.

* In the time of Chaucer, the father of English poetry, who was born near Woodstock.

No trivial purpose bids his numbers flow ;
 No trivial guest those hallow'd bounds await :
 —Meek virtue here shall shun th' impending blow,
 And here religion lodge her sacred freight.

Hark ! superstition lifts her savage voice !
 See ! kindred bands dissolve, and love recede !
 The pastor's hand th' imploring flock destroys ;
 And persecution bares her ruffian blade !

Ev'n mercy's self forsakes the bloody throne ;
 The Queen, * relentless, sees a sister led
 By alien hands, unfriended and alone,
 Where he rude prison rears her awful head.

Thy gates, O Woodstock ! ope with sullen sound ;
 In dismal view thy haggard walls appear !
 Starting, the royal captive gaz'd around,
 And down her pale cheek stole th' unheeded tear.

The jarring valves the stern attendants close !
 Her dreary lot the silent Princess eyes ;
 And as her fancy teem'd with future woes,
 Thus burst her passion intermix'd with sighs :

“ Look down, great *Henry* ! from the realms above,
 If earthly cares can reach thy holy rest,
 Behold the fruits of thine ill-omen'd love,
 Friendless, forlorn, by causeless hate oppress ! ”

* Mary.

“ Oh ! would to Heav’n, thy unrelenting rage
 Had erst involv’d me in a mother’s doom ;
 How easy death in that unthinking age,
 How soft the passage to an early tomb ?”

“ But now reflection points the coming blow,
 And mem’ry joins her keen, malignant light ;
 I see the deadly purpose of the foe,
 And deprecate in vain the dreadful fight !”

“ But who shall dare her private woes to mourn,
 When bleeding ENGLAND pours the gen’ral groan ?
 When pale religion points to CÆSAR’S urn,
 And holy frenzy guards the bloody throne ?”

“ Ill-fated England ! unsubdu’d before !
 ’Tis thine to suffer, and ’tis mine to weep ;
 In vain the frowning cliffs protect thy shore,
 And vain, with all her storms, thy circling deep.”

“ Thine inbred foe, the demon of the soul,
 Converts thy sceptre to an iron rod ;
 Soft pity sinks beneath his dire controul,
 And the proud Hierarch dares belie his God.”

“ Rome’s abject hirelings now infest the coast,
 Where erst the hardy Roman learn’d to fear ;
 Where * Gaul’s proud victor saw the British host
 Mock the keen light’ning of the lifted spear.”

* Julius Cæsar.

“ But now, even hope forsakes the mourning plain,
 No friendly ray pervades the settled gloom ;
 The prospect lours beneath the frown of SPAIN,
 And silent nations wait th’ impending doom.”

While thus the royal maid her sorrow spoke,
 Night stole unheeded on her rising woes ;
 And slumber lock’d her sense, but fancy woke,
 And, in her dreams, an aged minstrel rose.

A tuneful harp of antique form he bore,
 Drest like the bards of old, a quaint attire !
 And tho’ long years had snow’d his temples o’er,
 His eye preserv’d the poet’s genuine fire.

And this the awful prelude of his song :
 “ Hope shall revisit soon the mourning plain ;
 Even now thy name yon heav’nly choirs among
 Refounds, the future sov’reign of the main.

“ Heav’n-sent, those once-lov’d bounds my steps invade ;
 Thy causeless grief commission’d to expel !
 Of old a * tenant of this fairy shade,
 Where oft my wood-notes wild were heard to swell.

“ Here, † warlike HENRY his unhelmed brow
 Would oft recline to listen to my lyre ;

* Chaucer.

† Henry the Fourth of England.

Oft would his * son his genuine race avow,
And shew faint glimm'rings of his future fires.

“ Yet to have pleas'd the royal ear of old
Seems poor ambition to my present charge ;
Of fate the glorious purpose to unfold,
And shew the counsels of the sky at large.

“ Trac'd by the awful counsels of the sky,
Two paths of glory to thy choice are giv'n ;
Mark ! as the visions flit before thine eye,
And may thine option meet the smile of Heav'n.”

He said ; and soon, obedient to his wand,
Wide o'er the prospect spread an iron gleam ;
The throng'd pavilions hide the martial strand,
And in the air unnumber'd ensigns stream.

But lo ! the cross of England waves afar ;
The banded millions mix in mortal fight ;
And, hov'ring o'er the wide-extended war,
The foe of mankind soars with stern delight,

Those † to sustain, and these to overthrow
Th' imperial ensign, toil in bloody fray ;

* Henry the Fifth.

† Success of Elizabeth in sowing dissention among the French and Scots, her enemies. See Hume and Robertson.

And still the deadly contest seems to grow
Where'er the winds its crimson folds display,

Where'er the fiery meteor seems to wave,
In civil rage the broken bands disjoin ;
Loud discord's voice is heard around to rave,
And busy fiends the social ties untwine.

Then the stern ruler of the azure deep,
Seem'd o'er the scene his triple mace to wield ;
The wild waves spread around, with murm'ring sweep,
And ocean hid the late enfanguin'd field.

Around the stormy capes the fleets, far seen
Advancing in a line, for battle form ;
And now, a narrow interval between,
They meet with loud salute and dire alarm !

The flash, abrupt, foreruns the brazen roar ;
Responsive thunders roll around the bay ;
The sulph'rous vapour spreads from shore to shore,
Hiding the horrors of the doubtful day.

* The curtain'd clouds divide ; a scene appears
Of flames, and driving wrecks, and recent gore !
Eliza's name the gale in triumph bears !
Eliza's name resounds from shore to shore !

* Defeat of the Spanish Armada.

Distant at length the martial notes decay,
 And soon the whit'ning sails are lost to view ;
 With silent ebb retires the peaceful sea,
 And smiling summer clothes the fields anew.

Fair seem'd the scene, but unsubdu'd and wild,
 With, here and there reclin'd, an uncouth swain,
 Who, with rude songs, the vacant hours beguil'd,
 Or, musing, hear'd the pebbled rill complain.

Sudden the deep and lonely woods among
 Was heard the solemn music of the lyre ;
 The rude tribes crowd around the magic song,
 And rapture seem to catch the heav'nly fire.

Nor caught in vain ; for o'er the savage sense
 Mild reason seem'd to steal with gentle pace :
 New habits grow, and new designs commence,
 As on the *nymph* the thronging rustics gaze.

* *Alma* her name, her golden locks betray'd ;
 Her race deriv'd from him who rules the day ;
 A pearly zone her azure vest upstay'd,
 Giv'n by the sov'reign whom the floods obey.

Her voice explain'd the lessons of her lyre ;
 Her fainted look enforc'd the heav'nly song :
 Her lectures seem'd new wisdom to inspire,
 And mould the instinct of th' admiring throng.

* Establishment of the University in Dublin.

Soon o'er the fields the congregation spread ;
 A milder aspect soon adorn'd the plain ;
 Instant before their steps disorder fled,
 And ARTS and CULTURE follow'd in her train.

Scatter'd around, the jocund hamlet rose,
 And, girt with harvests boon, the village gay,
 Wide-stretching mounds the echoing main oppose,
 And cities far their spiry pride display.

* Above the rest a stately pile was seen,
 And issuing radiant thence a chosen band,
 † Who mark'd in measur'd lots the smiling green,
 And portion'd to the swains their destin'd land.

‡ Some, when rude contests rose the swains among,
 With healing words dispell'd the rising jar ;
 § And some were taught with soft mellifluous song,
 To cheer their toils beneath the sultry star.

|| Some taught the seaman to direct his prow
 O'er the broad Main, by mild Arcturus led ;
 ¶ And some explor'd the secret depths below,
 To find what nature there in silence bred.

** Some o'er the glebe induc'd the kindly show'r,
 Hast'ning the tardy spring with potent pray'r ;

* The College † Mathematicians. ‡ Statesmen and Lawyers.

§ Poets. || Astronomers. ¶ Natural Philosophers. ** Divines.

And when the wintry sky began to lour,
 With Heav'n-taught voice beguil'd the pangs of care.

The scene smil'd lovely, and in smiles withdrew ;
 The bard alone remain'd, and thus began :

" These future prospects op'ning to thy view,
 'Tis thine, with Heav'n-directed eye to scan."

" Either on conquest's purple wing to rise,
 Or deck with peaceful hand the savage plain ;
 To raise Old England's flag in hostile skies,
 Or nobler realms, with peaceful arts, to gain."

" 'Tis thine to chuse"—" Nor be the choice delay'd,"
 Sudden, tho' still entranc'd, the maid reply'd ;

" Be mine to triumph in the peaceful shade,
 Far from the dazzling pomp of martial pride."

" His captive legions let the victor shew ;
 Be mine the empire o'er the willing soul ;
 The veteran bands of vice to overthrow,
 And ignorance and error to controul."

" Be mine to rule the silent, studious train,
 Who form the manners and the man refine :
 Whose milder glories own no guilty stain,
 Whose peaceful brows no bloody wreath entwine.

" Thus myriads yet unborn shall gladly own,
 With unbought praise, my long remember'd sway,

And, plausible, hail my ACADEMIC THRONE,
When trophied arches fall, and urns decay."

" Some new PYTHAGORAS then may boast an eye
To trace the deeper wonders of the sphere ;
Some TULLY's thunder shake the northern sky,
And pour conviction on the gen'ral ear."

" Some kindly hand may bid the laurel spring,
Even in yon drear uncultivated soil ;
Some friendly patron teach the muse to sing,
And deathless strains reward the gen'rous toil."

She spoke : and thus the gentle bard reply'd :

" Still may you thus protect the gentle muse ;
Lo ! Heav'n, by me, hath thus thy judgment try'd,
And mark'd, well pleas'd, thy far-extended views.

" Alike in arts of peace and martial might,
Old England's genius dooms thee to excell :"
He spoke—and mingled with the shades of night ;
His lyre symphonious sent a sweet farewell.

F I N I S.

P R E F A C E

TO THE

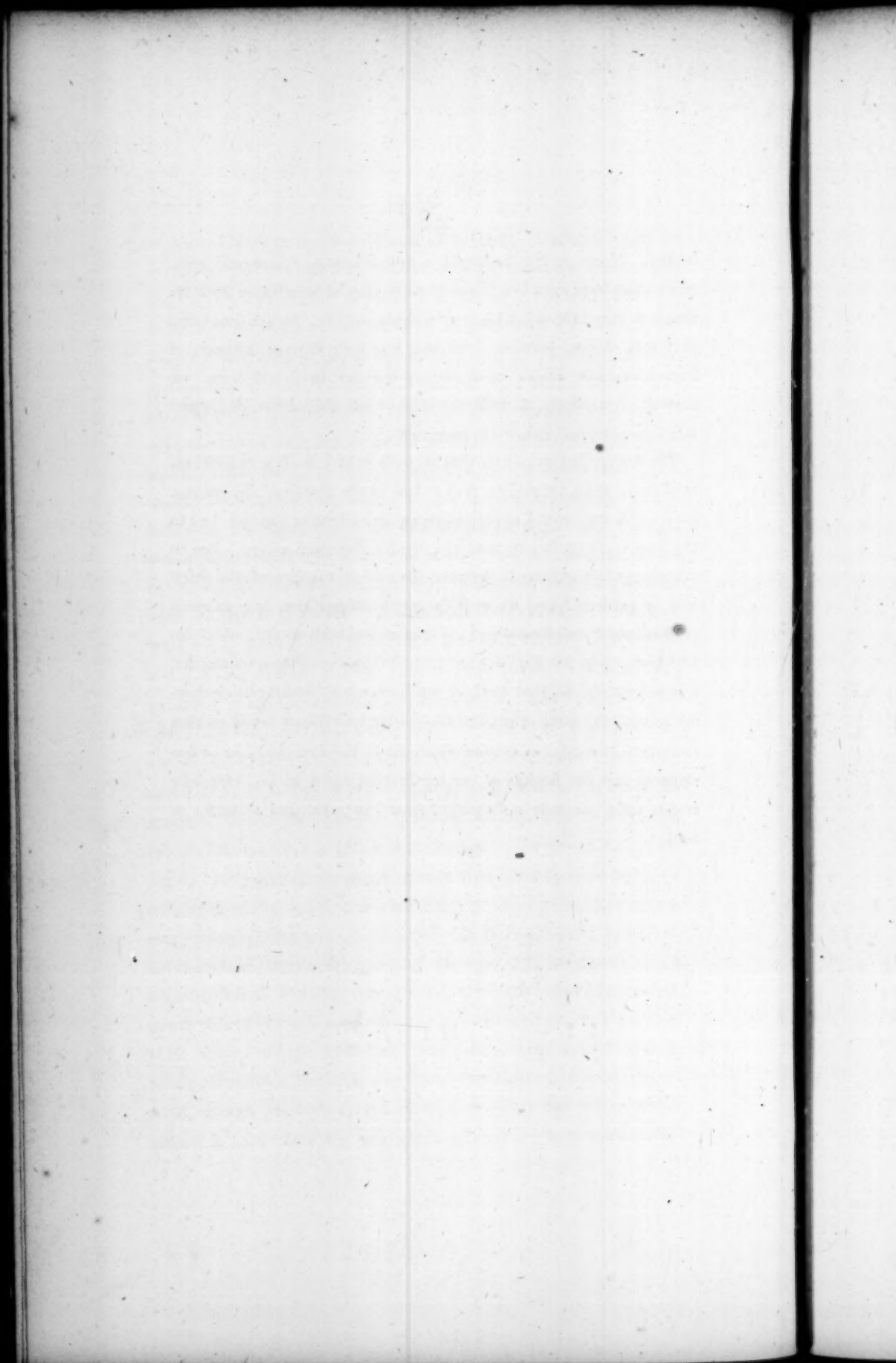
F O L L O W I N G P O E M.

THE design of the following rhapsody is, no less to investigate the progress, than the perversion of the spirit of liberty, the means by which it may be converted to the most beneficial purposes, will thence present themselves to the mind by an easy inference. In order to attain a clear conception of the subject, a few previous observations are necessary on the *different associations of ideas* by which mankind have been governed in the different periods of society. One of the *first* of these prejudices was the idea that affluence and its supposed concomitant, happiness, were invariably connected with *power*, and power with conquest.—Hence, in order to share the glory and the emoluments of the conqueror, numbers were easily persuaded to range themselves under his banners. This association of ideas reigned paramount for many ages—nor has it yet lost its influence over the imaginations of men. From the power of religion over the mind, the potentates of the earth soon perceived that, by the assistance of that mighty engine, they could best secure their dominion. As pure religion was the best support of society, they easily perceived that its corruption, superstition, would be

of admirable use to the establishment of tyranny. Under the pressure of this complicated machine, human nature groaned for many centuries and even yet, where despotism is established in the South and East, it owes its dominion principally to its alliance with Mahometan and Pagan superstition. During the darkest ages of Christianity, when ecclesiastical and civil tyranny *met in the Zenith*, the human mind, sometimes by feeble endeavours, and sometimes by strenuous efforts, took its opportunities of asserting its native privileges. It was a circumstance peculiarly favourable to those islands, that by a combination of incidents, the Monarch was induced to lead the way in rescuing his subjects from the rigorous yoke of ecclesiastical bondage. Our spiritual emancipation brought in what was wanting to our temporal deliverance, and the venerable fabric of our constitution, preserved, or recovered its original splendour. The situation of affairs on the Continent were not so favourable. Ecclesiastical and civil tyranny still existed there, in undiminished majesty. But though the body was depressed; in some the mind recovered its freedom, and formed by degrees a *new association of ideas*. It saw the mischiefs of superstition. It perceived its connexion with tyranny, and, confounding the notions of superstition and religion, it laid the faults of the depraved child, to the venerable mother. Hence the deplorable prevalence of that infidel spirit, now called philosophy in a neighbouring kingdom. The people there, having by one violent effort, obtained their liberty, and in their rage, not distinguishing the useful, from the noxious, vented their fury against every thing relating to their old ecclesiastical establishment, and levelled the whole fabric to the ground. How far they have emancipated themselves from the dominion of what is usually called religious and moral principles I will not pretend to say, the world will judge from their actions and the sentiments which have been uttered in their public assemblies: Yet, supposing some of these accounts to be exaggerated, enough has been ascertained to demonstrate the misery which attends a state where the primary obligations are forgotten or over-

looked. Hence, it may be hoped a new *association of ideas* will arise, and as men have been led, from the connexion of superstition with tyranny, to entertain unjust ideas of religion, so now, by the connexion they may observe between irreligion, and such flagrant instances of human depravity, with its attendant miseries, they will learn, no account of its effects, to hold the cause in just abhorrence, and regard religion as the best security to happiness.

The danger in this case is, that the evils which must necessarily attend such a great convulsion, will be laid to the charge of the genuine spirit of liberty, which always has been understood to conduce best to the happiness of society, and the dignity of human nature. But to this charge the answer is obvious: the noblest energies of the mind may be perverted, and its most dangerous propensities, may do much mischief under *their* semblance. If religion has been abused, and if superstition, under her disguise, has been the cause of so many calamities, it is not wonderful, that anarchy and licence have sanctified *their* enormities with the name of genuine *liberty*—but true liberty is not on that account to be accused of evils of which she is not the cause, and a due vigilance over the sanctity of our constitution ought to be, especially at this crisis, carefully distinguished from the pernicious attempts of faction.



THE
W A N D E R E R,
A
LYRIC POEM,
IN FOUR IRREGULAR ODES.

ODE THE FIRST.

THE

SHEPHERD'S DREAM.

I.

* TRENCH the turf, and delve it deep

" Raife my camp's eternal mound

" Build the long embattled sweep

" Flanking wide the vale profound !

" Point the passes, dark and dread

" Where my free-born sons afar

" Thund'ring down, with measur'd tread

" Oft shall turn the tide of war

" Encamp ye storms ! on yonder brow

" Tow'ring o'er the Leman wave

" Doom'd to whelm the hostile prow

" That dares her sacred flood to brave."

FREEDOM thus to NATURE spoke

When the Alpine range arose

* The scenery of this Ode is taken from Switzerland.

Long ere frore Aquilon shook
O'er their height his virgin snows.

II.

Cradle of heroes ! hail !
Hail, proud hills, whose giant arms
Of marble mold, repell the storms
From the high-favour'd vale.

All hail ! ye cloud-capt mounds, which nature gave
To check the proud barbarians headlong range.
To stem the northern tide's impulsive wave
And save the happy tribes from sudden change !

There like thy blue expanded lake
That drinks the Arar and the Rhone,
Thy native tribes a tincture take
Of those who from a colder zone
In daring search of sunnier vales
In thy deep glens a shelter found.
And yet, the dauntless stock prevails
Old Leman's lawny borders round
Before, the frontier lake extends
Swept ever by the mountain gale,
Rude ranger of her awful deep,
Whose high-commission'd whirlwinds keep
From the vexed wave the hostile sail.
Behind the Alpine barrier bends,
Here JURA from his high cerulean brow
Surveys an hundred realms below
There SIEN lifts his cloudy cone
Aspiring to the midnight moon

Cradle of heroes! hail!

O'ER thy proud ramparts to the welkin pil'd

The awful sound of revolution goes,

Oft, shadowing their eternal snows

Fell Tyranny hath wing'd her vulture flight

Nor on thy green vales dar'd to light

Scar'd at FREEDOM's dauntless eye

That flash'd defiance thro' the sky.

Southward she wheel'd, from her undaunted foes

On tamer tribes to prey.

WHEN ancient Rome, with wild affray

Saw her new-raised temples fall.

Thou * Helvetia! lent thine aid,

From thy vales, fermenting deep

Revolting from their iron sleep

O'er thy hills, the living tide

Swept the astonish'd vales in surging pride.

Desponding mute and still

Jove trembled for his hill,†

Supprest his thund'ring pride,

And laid his bolts aside.

To *them* what were *his* mimic fires

Who from old Cenis awful spires

Or from Pennino's breezy brow

Heaven's light'ning oft had seen with dauntless eye

Glance along the frozen sky, ‡

* Invasion of Italy by the Gauls, defeated by Marius.

† The Capitol.

‡ The Glaciers.

Whose figur'd fabric strode the sunless vale below,

* Nor had the Tullian thunders more prevail'd

The fate of Rome, by Heaven withheld

Had yet the start of yon revolving sphere

Before the destin'd year,

But TYRANNY with wild alarm

Beheld the coming storm

And sent mistrust and breach of faith

(Her favourite ministers of old)

The bold confederates, bent on death

Disband, by Roman arts controll'd.

SHE call'd her Cæsar from his dark retreat,

Not "in loose numbers wildly sweet,"

And sent him forth to search the source

Whence those ills deriv'd their force.

He, as a chief whose troops invest the wall

Of some beleaguered castle strong,

Wanders, the shelving hills among

To find the spring, whose subterranean maze

The garrison's fierce thirst allays,

And keeps alive the war.

Thus, to the climes that front the Boreal star

He took his dauntless way.

* Junction of the Allobrogie Galls with Catiline discried, and prevented by Cicero, &c. Sallust.

* Expedition of Cæsar in Gaul, his prevention of the Helvetic migration and conquest of that warlike people. Cæsar Com. l. 1.

Just as from wild Appenzel's vales,
 From Berne and Uris' watry dales,
 And Basil's meads, and Leman's strand,
 Burst away the countless band.
 Pent in their narrow glens they long had mourn'd,
 And for an ampler range of glory burn'd.
 The demons of despotic sway,
 With stern regard, from Sion's height
 Saw the torrent burst away,
 And bade their Cæsar check its flight.
 Back to its source he bade the living torrent flow,
 Back to its source the living torrent flow'd
 The smother'd flame indignant glow'd
 Ages long of torpid woe.—

III.

Long centuries of cheerless gloom
 Like a live lamp laid in a tomb,
 It burn'd, and now the raging north
 Had call'd again the conflagration forth.
 But ere it blew, the demon of the soul
 Had stretch'd his sway from pole to pole
 And, not content, with iron rod
 To sink to slaves the sons of God.
 His Mulciberian arts refin'd *
 Forg'd the fetters of the mind,

* Effects of papal superstition, which in some respects, prevented the good consequences which might have attended the irruption of the Goths.

Bade his demons from the deep
 Profane at will the curtain'd sleep
 Display the blest Elysian bowers
 The sentenc'd dead, the burning shores.
 The silver fee, the sanguine scourge
 That rescued from the flaming surge
 And Mammon kept the door
 Disguis'd in humble fisher's weed.
 Like him of old by Heaven decreed,
 To call the Gentile world from Jordan's hallow'd shore.
 And here the demons * too were found
 Who on Bœotia's flow'ry bound
 And Athens, erst with mystic rite
 And orgies wild profan'd the night.
 The archimage in faintly stole array'd
 And she, like UNA, heavenly maid
 By wicked wiles, seductive art
 Allur'd the crowd of simple heart.
 They, † in the symbols given to memorize
 The dread event on which they built their faith.
 Behold with fascinated eyes
 Like Egypt's sons, a vegetable god
 Spring in the green blade, flourish in the stem
 And load, with seeming life, the bending ear.
 At the lying wizard's word
 A spell-wrought banquet crown'd the board,

* Bacchus and Ceres.

† Effects of the doctrine of transubstantiation.

The grape's red juice became the vital tide
 Streaming from their Saviour's side.
 Bland Ceres' gifts, by holy fraud
 Instinct, with mystic life, became
 Emanuel's rent, and agonizing frame
 The living cates, receiv'd within
 They taught, had power to cleanse the taint
 Of new-committed sin
 And of a murtherer make a saint.
 The crowd in fancy, saw their bounteous Lord
 And, hoodwink'd by the charm, they swallow'd and ador'd.
 Repentance chang'd to mimic rites
 To mutter'd prayers, and easy flights
 The penal maze they trode with pain
 And hasten'd back to sin again.
 Or, was the penitent of wealth possess
 The pious magian sooth'd his holy fears
 With sovereign touch, the *silver wand*
 Dry'd the salt spring of salutary tears
 And calm oblivion touch'd his wounds with torpid hand.
 The magic rites the fancy fir'd
 Of the initiate train inspir'd
 With visions new of op'ning glory
 And, show'r'd like manna, heav'nly grace
 Like him * who erst in fabled story
 At Jove's own banquets found a place.
 CEMENTED now by magic flight

* Tantalus.

Threat'ning to stretch her sway from pole to pole
Despotic o'er the soul.

Beneath the moon the fabric rose

Sacred to Hades and old Night
And low'r'd defiance on her ancient foes.

But lo! the turns of fate
By night it rose and by a dream it fell,
The edifice of hell!

'Twas something more than fancy's plastic power
That fir'd the SLUMB'RING BOY's extatic thought

(Whether in him the soul of ATHENS' sage*

Walk'd again this earthly stage,

Or old Elijah's wrath at rites profane

Led him to leave the starry plain)

And held him high, by holy rapture caught

Above the haunted vale

Unfam'd by many an hideous tale

Of midnight spectres seen

Sweeping o'er the dewy green.

THERE many a baleful simple grew

Batt'ning in the midnight dew,

Two spectral forms he there beheld

Wand'ring round in vapours blue

The powers they seem'd, whose names of old

The Pagan world ador'd

The harvest Queen, the vineyard's Lord,

His bowl's red juice † the Bromian King

Temper'd at Lethe's lurid spring

* Socrates.

† Bacchus.

(For there a branch of Lethe seem'd to rise
Portentous from the nether skies)

The wizard thus, and in her shadowy lap

The witch was seen to crop

The seeds of Lotos * where it seem'd to grow

In many a goodly row.

She mixt it with the golden grain,

She fann'd it with her mystic vane.

IV.

A gorgeous temple in his dream appear'd

And there an altar high was rear'd

And there the magic cup, the venom'd feast

Inviting every guest.

The suppliants came, they gorg'd, they quaff'd

And Folly rav'd and Frenzy laught,

Bland Superstition's trickling balm

Shed o'er each mind an holy calm.

Conscience felt the deadly wound

And sunk in vap'ry trance profound.

He wakes—he hears the fancy'd bell

That call'd the madding crowd

Distinct and loud

Again he hears

And hardly trusts his trembling ears

Again the brazen summons sounds

Again his trembling ear it wounds

* Which caused the companions of Ulysses to forget their native country. See *Odyssey*, l. 12.

He joins the blind devoted train
 He enters now the opening fane
 He sees the magic bowl once more
 The cates prepar'd with mystic lore
 Where, as he gorg'd the magic food
 The haughty mortal seem'd a God.

Heaven had purg'd the stripling's eyes,
 Or active fancy drew
 Again to his astonish'd view
 The natives of the nether skies.
 Flashing anger, pale surprize,
 Alternate froze, alternate glow'd
 On his pale cheek as he stood
 And "oh," he cry'd, "forbear, forbear!"
 (The crowd their orisons withheld)
 "See the fraudful phantoms there
 "Whose sway the ancient world bewail'd
 "They mix their dark spells with the faintly rite
 "And haunt the holy roof in Heaven's despite
 "See Ceres there, and Bacchus stand
 "The magian with commission'd wand
 "Deals on this forbidden ground
 "His fell demonian charms around."
 "In league with fell despotic sway
 "He bends your free-born souls to tremble and obey.
 "Seize him," the Flamen cry'd
 (His bosom burning with pontific pride)
 "Haste, bring that youth! some imp of hell

" Bids his demonian frenzy swell

" Haste, exorcise the latent pest

" That harbours in his heaving breast

" And interrupts our heavenly rite!

" Hurl him to Hades and old Night."

The Ministers obey'd the stern command

And seiz'd the youth with potent hand

The Priest his mutter'd spells began

And o'er his incantations ran.

The sacring bell began to toll

To disengage the lab'ring soul.

In vain—his eyes began to glow

His giant nerve repell'd the foe

While, from the full vase sprinkled frore

The sacred lymph bedew'd the floor.

With vigorous arm he dash'd around

The lifted crosses,—the vase profound.

The magic book he hurls afar

And all the sacerdotal war.

Prostrate on earth in wild affray

Around the pale assistants lay

Sudden, the strange contagion spread

Revolt and faction rais'd its head

The madding crowd, as well as he

Clearly saw, or seem'd to see

The demon gods of ancient days

Partners of celestial praise.

And from the fane at once recoil'd
Following their youthful guide, like Moses, to the wild.

V.

With more than moonstruck rage tyrannic power

Bann'd aloud the luckless hour.

" Oh ! had I been content," he cry'd,

" With war and slaughter by my side

" To trust the trenchant sword alone

" Nor call for succour to the gown

" Nor let their cobweb arts essay

" To lead the multitude astray,

" Even ignorance, to thought unus'd

" Feels its implicit faith abus'd.

" But haste, ye Ministers of mine, who wield

" Far other and more deadly arms

" Nor vainly trust to futile charms !

" Pursue the fugitives, pursue

" While yet the bold revolt is new

" While yet it lies in woods conceal'd

" Ere thro' the long Helvetian vales

" This home-bred lunacy prevails.

" Call to the Tiber, Seine, and Loire

" To quench the rising flame, to join their liquid store

" And bid my favour'd Elbe and Rhine

" To aid my cause their force combine."

Instant, his legions heard their Lord

Havock rous'd her northern horde

Discord fires the kindred trains

And Leman's lake with crimson stains.

* Freedom with religious faith
 'Mongst the shadowy cliffs combining
 Feed the fray with magic breath
 Bright conquest now to this, now that enclining.
 Murther now, with stealthy pace
 Wand'ring thro' the midnight gloom
 The bold reformer holds in chace
 To mark him for the tomb.
 Safety is there for *him* no more
 Tho' his faction still survives
 And the blest energy to other realms derives.
 Yet still by civil conflicts tost
 Religion's patron seeks a safer coast
 And in the northern ocean dips his oar.

* Infurrection in Switzerland, headed by Zuinglius the reformer.

† There is, it is owned, something of anachronism in the foregoing ode. Religion had very little immediate influence on the first commencement of Helvetic liberty, which happened near a century before the reformation; whatever share the latter revolution might have had in the subsequent establishment of the Helvetic constitution.

ODE THE SECOND.

THE

SHEPHERD'S NUPTIALS.

I.

* CITADEL of freedom, hail !
Majestic rising o'er the tempest-beaten main
Who to the persecuted train
On every blast, from every shore
Where regal frenzy dips his foot in gore
Giv'st an asylum in thy wave-worn pale
And beckonest with dumb welcome o'er
The far-discovered sail !
And not for nought,—for soon at hand
Yon pinace furls her sail, the Exile seeks the land.
Oh England ! if thou lik'st to sleep
In tranquil slumbers folded deep
And hatest proud innovation's name,
Her lifted ax, her brandish'd flame,

* England.

Send, oh send, again to sea,
 The moody wanderer far from thee !
 For this is he whose chanted psalm
 Broke old URS holy calm
 In Berne the flag of freedom wav'd
 And Rome's cowl'd squadrons singly brav'd
 Loos'd the charms that lock'd the mind
 And from thick films the mental eye refin'd
 The chief to thee is fled, but leaves behind
 Discord's rage that drowns the wind
 Fierce debates, and wordy wars
 Faction's feuds and kindred jars.
 Till dear-bought freedom sends again
 Her holy calm to bless her mountain reign.

II.

Has no sign his coming told
 No cause the reflux surge controll'd
 No meteor fir'd the angry air
 No comet stream'd a length of hair?—
 Time should now affrighted stand
 His idle weapon in his hand
 The sun should halt in mid career
 To see the wond'rous birth appear.—
 His coming by no sign is told
 The reflux surge is uncontroll'd
 No meteor fires the angry air,
 No comet streams a length of hair,
 Nor Time astonish'd seems to stand
 Nor holds his scythe with idle hand,

Nor halts the fun in mid career
 To see the wond'rous birth appear.—
 The simple train, that sees him land
 With rustie welcome line the strand,
 Nor, tho' he wears a look severe
 His unthought coming seem to fear,
 For not on them * his coming lours
 Who pass their spotless hours
 In hamlets poor, an harass'd train
 Up the hill, or o'er the plain.
 No—yonder Flamen's proud abode
 Fanes, which belie the name of God
 Cloister'd cells, where prison'd deep
 The mental powers in Lethes' sleep
 Repose, or pamper'd passions rave
 Like pent up storms in Æol's cave
 Where Luxury pants, and oft by stealth
 Draws a blinded nation's wealth,
 They may fear, but they are drown'd
 By wayward Fate in sleep profound
 Nor mind (by torpid Sloth subdued,)
 The menace of the mountain flood
 Fed by many a secret rill
 As the dews of evening still.
 But soon the thund'ring tide will sweep
 Their golden harvests to the deep

* Influence of the Reformation on the liberties of England.

And yonder snows, that, hoarded high
 For many a winter seem to lye
 Shall join the torrent's rapid flow
 And lay your haughty fabrics low
 For now the stranger in the wild
 Late from URIS' bounds exil'd
 Far within a sacred glade
 Where hawthorns grew, a fenceful shade
 Found a weeping widow, late
 * Sever'd from her faithful mate,
 Her faithful mate, by cleric spite
 (She thought) had sunk to endless night,
 And now resolv'd to quit the shore
 The reliques of their ancient store
 They glean'd, resolv'd to cross the main
 With her young blooming orphan train
 Of these, a maid with heav'nly charms
 The stranger's rugged bosom warms.
 His suit the young Helvetian prest
 And form'd an interest in her breast.
 The matron heard the lover's prayer
 And soon consenting blest the pair.
 She seem'd her longing to retain
 Of following Fate across the main,

* Origin of the puritanic spirit occasionally augmented by a communication with Geneva, and from a dislike of ecclesiastical government, causing frequent emigrations to New England and Pennsylvania, during the reigns of James the First and Charles.

See note at the end of the volume.

Yet staid, till Time her round had run
 And the blest exile clasp'd a son,
 Short liv'd joy, to anguish turn'd!
 Soon his loss the parents mourn'd.
 Whether by vagrant thieves purloin'd
 Who chanc'd the wand'ring boy to find,
 Or moonlight fays (from blest exil'd)
 Who fear'd the fortunes of the child
 Not yet was known, And loud and long
 His parents wail'd, by anguish stung
 And both at once devoutly swore
 To leave that sad, ill-omen'd shore,
 They hoist the sail and court the wind
 Leaving their ELDEST HOPE behind.

III.

Their ELDEST HOPE, an ancient crone
 Had borne away to glins unknown.
 Skill'd in witching love was she
 Her cot was by the ancient *Dee*,
 Ancient *Dee*, of wizard name
 Where still the fays their sabbath claim,
 There, beneath the moony light
 O'er the watry mirrour bright
 Oft he saw his fires advance
 Gleaming in the lunar glance,
 Warriours old of Saxon brood
 Who the tyrant sway withstood.
 Now in wild, expressive strains
 Bloody fields and broken chains,

Oft, and oft, he heard them sing
 Circling round in mazy ring.
 The boy attends with sparkling eyes
 To dauntless deeds of high emprise,
 The glorious visions haunt his sleep
 And shed th' infusion full and deep.
 Now of heavenly truths she tells
 Taught in hamlets, and in cells
 By the Arimathæan old
 Wafted here in times of gold.
 Nothing now he seems to breathe
 But ancient freedom, ancient faith,
 Ancient laws, and ancient tales
 And spreads them thro' the list'ning vales,
 Like his restless fire of yore
 Round old Leman's winding shore.
 Soon the simple swains began
 To crowd around the wond'rous man
 And propagate his rapt'rous strains
 O'er Britannia's list'ning plains.
 Despotie power, with wild alarm
 Call'd her levied bands to arm,
 And bar'd her blade, and wav'd her brand
 To drive the rebels from the land.
 Captivity disclos'd her glooms
 And peopled all her noisome rooms.

* Tyranny of the Star Chamber and High Commission Courts,

But Bondage, sword, and Fire were vain
 To crush the still encreasing train,
 Who claim'd their rights, and knew their force,
 Their BARD had taught the sacred source
 From which they drew their charters old
 By ancient M nemon's care enroll'd.
 But ah ! too feeble is my song
 To sing the conflict stern and strong,
 The stratagems, the rage employ'd
 The mighty quarrel to decide.
 And now the roving muse the flight explores
 Of that desponding pair who left Britannia's shores.

The epithet *despotic* will not be thought too severe for the 12 first
 years of Charles First's reign, distinguished by arbitrary taxation, and
 a disuse of Parliament.

ODE THE THIRD.

THE

SHEPHERD'S VOYAGE.

I.

SHOULD some strong hand unmoon the sky
And spread from Demogorgon's loom
The curtain deep of Stygian gloom,
Nor leave a star, with twinkling eye
Our wand'ring planet to illumine,
(Except some meteor broke the fable woof,
Shot thro' Heaven's umbrageous roof)
'Twould shew, our world's lamented plight,
Sunk in Slavery's thickest night,
When Freedom's ever-moving tide
From our fadden'd shores retir'd
Except one favour'd land, where fate conspir'd
To bid the doubtful blessing still abide,
Like the star that rules the flood
She bade her retinue obey

The shadowy throng her call pursu'd
 And mov'd in order west away.
 * Hesperia's groves obedient bow'd
 As the pomp aerial past,
 As o'er Oswego's tranquil flood
 Her breezy robe the goddess cast,
 With murmurs low the foamy waters curl'd
 And hail'd the mistress of the western world.
 The genii of the woods and waves
 The spirits of the hills and caves
 Her presence felt; the savage tribes
 Each the sacred power imbibes,
 But intellectual light alone
 Could give the Queen a steadfast throne
 Cecropia's old and equal laws
 Rome's well digested code, and Alfred's ancient laws.

II.

Religion too, seraphic maid
 The goddess call'd to aid,
 'Then to the climes from whence the day-spring flows
 Where the confed'rate powers of heaven and earth
 Matur'd of old the intellectual birth,
 Where blooms the citron, and, the palm tree blows
 She look'd for aid, for with the rising sun
 The dawn of science first begun,
 And with slow progress verging west
 The world's revolving shores like travelling summer blest

* North America.

And see, the fated barque at anchor wait
 Ordain'd from shore to shore to cull her precious freight,
 The broad Atlantic first she skims,
 * Zibalterras sea-beat brims
 She leaves, and many a far fam'd isle
 To where Emanuel clos'd his earthly toil—
 Thence, North by West the winged vessel steers
 And from each Dorian, each Ionian coast,
 Climes renown'd in ancient days
 Themes of everlasting lays
 A willing exile bears,
 Thro' seas, by many a Land emboss'd
 To † Luna's port she plows her liquid road
 Thence, by Massilia, thro' the midland flood
 Then stems the tide to Calpes strand
 To Britain thence, by Fate's command
 Where on the shore the youthful stranger stood ‡
 Desponding on his wayward fate
 With him his young and lovely mate
 Ready to pass the foaming flood,
 The vessel moor'd
 They haste aboard,
 The last of that heaven-destin'd freight.

III.

Now, 'twixt the old world and the new
 Suspended, like that favour'd crew

* Old name of Gibraltar.

† On the western coast of Italy.

‡ See Ode 2d.

Who mann'd the sacred planks by Heaven decreed
To save the last remains of mans' devoted seed,

They hover on the Atlantic deep.

Ah! would the banded West but rise

And drive them back to Dover's steep

Ere old Columbus gain the prize!

In vain the wish, in vain the prayer!

They go, transplanted to a kindlier mold

Where warmer suns sublime the year

Before our vales their blooms unfold!—

As Egypt fabled, from the west

Forgetful of his Indian bed

In new-born state triumphant drest

Another sun shall lift his head

And eastward turn his ardent face

And backward tread th' ecliptic way

The muses shall attend his race

And all the arts in bright array.

Hyperion's son shall wond'ring view

His glittering rival crosses his car,

His steeds of mere ethereal hue

Whose footsteps fire the ambient air.

Of ripen'd fruits Hyperion boasts

The spreading palm, the sparkling gem

The golden hoard, the spicy coast

The offspring of his potent beam.

Not so, the lord of intellectual light

He bids the purest germs of genius bloom

Which chaces from the mind Cimmerian night
 And bids Virginia's warriors equal Rome.
 See ! how the rising zephyrs breathe away
 Yon envious clouds that hide his sapphire throne !
 See, Tyranny beholds with dire dismay,
 And flies before the God from zone to zone.

IV.

But oh ! presumptuous muse ! detain
 The frenzy of the rising strain—
 —Yet, but the dubious dawn is seen
 O'er th' Atlantic wavy green,
 Columbus' world in soft repose
 Yet no startling signal knows.
 For yet her heavenly guests on alien ground
 Roam in disguise like weary pilgrims round,
 Yet, where they walk, the lawns extend
 Defolation leaves the path
 And, with less savage wreath
 The woods around the hills their less'ning umbrage bend
 The wood nymphs forc'd to leave the strand
 Left a fearful curse behind,
 And see it settles o'er the land
 It blackens in the wind !
 Hovering o'er the old world far
 Brews the stygian storm
 The god of battles climbs his car
 Oppression, avarice, factious rage
 Fanatic feuds, by many an age

Nearest to a giant form
 See! where their victims crowd the strand
 Some from the pressure of the tyrant's hand
 Some by the spectre Want pursue'd
 Some, by the restless spark within
 Impell'd the wat'ry world to roam
 Impatient of a settled home,
 Or by some stroke of cruel fate,
 Hapless love, or ruthless hate,
 Doom'd to trust the fickle wind
 And leave their loves, their cares behind.
 Each fiery spirit check'd at home
 Or pent in deep oblivion's gloom,
 There hop'd an ample range to find
 For th' excursions of the mind.
 With joy Oppression saw them go
 And smooch'd his formidable brow
 When those, he deem'd the demons of the storm
 Who us'd to spread the wild alarm
 And oft unsettled all his schemes
 And often broke his golden dreams
 Were gone, she hop'd again to know
 The halcyon days of bliss below,
 As when Assyria felt his rod
 And Persia own'd an earthly God.
 Nor more the Spartan fife to hear
 Deadly music to her ear.

But instead, some courtly strain
In Lydian measure breath'd to soothe his tyrant reign.

V.

Oh! ill advis'd! because the parched vale
Rises in dust beneath the Orient blast.
To think the western storm no more will swell
To lay at once thy waving harvest waste?
That power which keeps the air in equal poise
And bids the viewless current ebb and flow,
Who now bids Auster load the humid skies
And now Aquilon lift his virgin snow.
That power, for wiser ends has sent the scourge
Of lawless power this weeping planet round,
He'll waft again his exile o'er the surge
And nations tremble at her Clarion's sound.
When he would call some great event to birth
To startle heaven, and shake the sons of earth,
He bids men's selfish views the fabric raise
And from *his* stormy rage elicits praise.

He calls the mental beam away
To the source of endless light
The passions hail the welcome night
And domineer with furious sway.

Then drives the vessel of the state
On the rocks of mad debate.
Despotic power, in the fierce conflict spent,
To fill her faint, exhausted veins
Quaffs the life-blood of the swains.

The swains at last relent
 And their rous'd vengeance sweeps away
 At once the plunder and the prey.
 Thus man, by others harm untaught
 Learns moderation from his own disastrous lot.

VI.

And thou, perfidious Gaul
 That lend'st thy weak hand to thy neighbour's ponderous fall
 And swell'st the loud alarm afar
 Where Boston breathes revenge and war
 Ill does thy feeble pipe, with tuneful strife
 Aspire to join its sounds with Sparta's life.
 Yet long enur'd to themes of glory
 Soon it leaves the Lydian measure
 Learn'd in scenes of courtly pleasure
 Ere freedom op'd her wond'rous leaf of story.
 O brainfick men! to think each slavish tool
 Will come from this tremendous school,
 With the same habitudes he felt before
 On your voluptuous, smooth, seductive shore.
 No—like the fam'd Trophonian grot
 Where oft the sons of dance and song
 At their first entrance frisk'd along
 Then visited the world with alter'd sober thought.
 Thy merry slaves are taught another mood
 In yonder solemn groves beyond the flood.
 Like Britons now they learn to think and feel,
 And in the tyrant's face to lift the light'ning steel!

* Thee too and thy arts of yore
 Felt by that Helvetian swain,
 The Leman lake's resounding shore
 Mourn'd thro' all her wide domain.

Him tho' thy dark, pernicious arts annoy'd,
 And drove to Britain, thence to Georgia's wild ;
 And thought the spirit-stirring race destroy'd,
 The parent lives, transplanted in the child.

* Machinations of the French against the liberties and religion of Switzerland ; and the persecutions of the puritans in England ; set on foot partly by French politics.

ODE THE FOURTH.

THE

SHEPHERD'S RETURN.

I.

WHO yon fated pipe bestow'd
On that wayward shepherd boy?
Hark! he charms the list'ning crowd
Where yon hill salutes the sky!
From Helvetian race he comes,
Of that haughty line is he
Which relentless Fortune dooms
Still to range from sea to sea.
On yon hill he takes his post,
Where advancing, van to van,
Leagu'd against the freeborn host
England's legions sweep the lawn.

* Hark! the moody minstrel plays!
 Freedom beats the jocund round,
 While, unfinew'd by his lays
 Britain stands in torpor bound.
 Soon the tints of memory fade,
 Glory warms her sons no more;
 Faction feuds their ranks invade,
 Selfish aims, and pleasures lore.
 Strange effects of mingled strains!
 Here in phalanx firm unite,
 Levied new, the rustic swains,
 And like veterans, brave the fight.
 Blindfold there their foes invade,
 Thoughtless march, and thoughtless fall;
 In the gloomy ambuscade,
 Like a net, surrounding all.
 Rouse, Britannia, rouse to arms!
 See another foe appear,
 Gallia joins the loud alarms,
 Point anew thy dreadful spear!
 Again, old England's native courage glows,
 She pours vindictive on her ancient foes.
 † Hastings draws the lineal sword,
 By brave Plantagenet, in slaughter dy'd.

* Opposite effects of the *same* education and sentiments of liberty, in the English invaders and the American defenders.

† The present Earl of Moira, then Lord Rawdon, descended from the Royal Family of Plantagenet, by the line of Clarence.

When flying Gaul in vain her saints implor'd
 And drop'd her libid pride.
 But all in vain,
 The wily train,
 Avoids the coming foe ;
 His rage beguiles
 And mocks his toils,
 And wards the lifted blow.
 Rest of her conquests, by their usual art,
 Britannia mounts the deck with vengeful heart ;
 Resolv'd, since all her toils by land are vain,
 To vindicate the waves, and chase them from the main.

II.

And now, perfidious Gaul, to vast designs
 Expands the powers of her ambitious soul ;
 In fancy now she grasps Potosi's mines,
 And rules the western world from pole to pole :
 And many a province, for her equal meed,
 In thought she claims, rapacious as of old,
 When sad Alsatia saw her shepherds bleed
 And Belgia's plains a tale of carnage told.
 But when the Guardian of the clime,
 Heard from her cloudy throne, afar,
 The murmurs of the sinking war ;
 From her seat sublime
 She watch'd the future births of time,
 And saw the dangers dread, and near
 To her nascent realm appear :

Then, verging like the setting moon
 To the fount of Niagar,
 As the pale night's witching noon,
 The mighty mother bent her car.
 She call'd the Power who sends the flood
 Down the loud resounding steep,
 Before her face the vision stood,
 Like blue mist steaming from the deep.
 "Haste," she cry'd, "your PARENT POWER
 Seek beneath the briny wave,
 "Revolutions charge the hour *
 "Man's best rights his aidance crave.
 "Tell the FLOODS, when you convene
 "In the palace of your fire,
 "Rapid Rhone, imperial Seine,
 "Reed-crown'd Scheld, and viny Loire.
 "Tell what Freedom here has done,
 "And give to each this sovereign juice
 "Gather'd in the night's pale noon
 "And bid him in his streams infuse.
 "Mingled with the nation's bowl,
 "Soon their fervent sons shall feel

* From the restless spirit of the French, it may well be supposed that if their former government had continued, the jealousy of despotism might have induced them, at some period, to endeavour to weaken the power of the American Union, by open or secret means, if Providence had not interfered in favour of the United States, by giving the French liberty.

" Roman energy of soul

" And proudly grasp the Freeman's steel."

III.

The spectre stretch'd his shadowy hand,

And the magic mixture took ;

Of potent drugs, from many a land,

Flowers from fair Ilyssus' brook.

Roots that love the rocky mound,

When the royal Spartan bled, *

Herbs that spring on sacred ground

Where the soul of Brutus fled.

Pansies pale that love the bourne

Where Eurotas' naiads stray,

Daffodils, that ever mourn,

Where the slaughter'd Wallace lay.

King-cups fair, profusely fed,

By the chiding brook that flows

Round the skirts of Runnimeade,

Where Britannia's Freedom rose.

Thus, surcharg'd, he left the steep,

And sunk beneath the beating brine,

Where the seniors of the deep

Round their hoary King combine.

Then he dealt the limpid prize

To his brethren, first decreed,

When they sought the upper skies,

Freedom's nascent stem to feed.

* Leonidas.

* † Near Athens.

To check Ambition's wide-encroaching schemes
 By the fierce influx of domestic woes,
 And break the purple tyrant's golden dreams,
 By the dire tale of subjects turn'd to foes.

IV.

Hence the goddess to her charge
 Over forest, over plain
 Hastens to the sea-beat verge
 Of her wide Atlantic reign. *
 Thence the shepherd boy she brought
 Viewless to her shady grot,
 Bade his ringlets flow with grace,
 Breathed the cherub in his face;
 Taught his pipe a softer sound,
 The ear to soothe, but not to wound.
 Then, amid the Gallic train †
 Led the blooming boy again,
 The victor Gaul resigns his arms
 And clasps the minstrels heavenly charms :
 See the vet'trans thronging round
 All caress the wond'rous boy ;
 Soon his pipe's enchanting sound,
 Fills their hearts with frantic joy.
 Ah ! the soldiers little know
 While upon his charms they gaze.

* America.

† By these are meant, the French troops in America, during the late war.

That star-like eye, that front of snow,
 And his mien's ethereal grace.
 Little do they dream what ills
 His infectious presence brings;
 What a charm his pipe instills,
 Fierce revolt, and hate of Kings!
 Cupid, not so fierce a flame,*
 Wak'd in fair Eliza's breast,
 When the fair Sidonian dame
 That insidious child carest!
 Now the groaning deck he climbs,
 Her proud charge the vessel bears,
 While his pipe and rustic rhyme,
 Soothes the seamens raptur'd ears.
 Now the fated vessel moors
 On fair Gaul's unconscious strand;
 Fashion's vot'ries crowd the shores,
 Fashion hails him come to land.
 Fashion! proud fantastic Queen
 Fond of every foreign toy,
 Wilt thou dote upon his mein,
 Canst thou clasp a shepherd boy?
 Soon upon the banks of Seine
 Royal eyes shall weep the day
 When thine ear, fantastic Queen
 Listen'd to the shepherd's lay!
 Yet, ye Nobles! tho' his lay

* See Virg. Æn. I.

Grates upon a courtly ear,
 Drive suspicion far away,
 Show no dastard signs of fear.
 No, ah no—with gentle words,
 Soothe the wayward boy awhile;
 Dream no more of binding cords,
 Open force, or latent guile!
 Let him wander at his will,
 Let him chant his simple song
 And from thicket, glade, or hill
 Charm at large the rustic throng!
 For he is of that wand'ring race
 Blest with unsuppressive might,
 Erst they gain'd that sovereign grace
 From the source of life and light.
 Dungeon deep, nor castle strong
 E'er shall see him brook the chain;
 Soon the base intended wrong
 Viewless aid shall render vain.
 See! like attraction's world-pervading might,
 Soon as the general ear has drunk his lay,
 Regardless of their tenements of clay
 Their spirits press to him with fierce delight!

V.

But now the Monarch's jealousy is rous'd,
 The royal lips pronounce his doom;
 The wand'rer from his simple cot unhous'd
 Is borne to sigh amid the dungeon's gloom.

The echoing vaults were said to shake
 When first the swain was lodg'd below ;
 And some beheld the turrets quake
 Prefageful of their overthrow.

And to the moon, full many a martyr'd sprite,
 Wan tenants of her cells, in ancient days,
 Stole a short respite from the realms of night,
 And sung in ghostly quires, a song of solemn praise.

The morning came, the pipe was mute,
 That us'd to wake the new-born beam ;
 The crowd who lov'd to hear his flute,
 By spreading oak, or falling stream ;
 Trac'd his steps, nor sought him long
 By instinct led, or black surmise,
 To those imperial rampires strong,

Where, shut from day, the captive lies.
 Within they heard, or thought they heard,
 The shepherd's morning roundelay ;
 Whether their hopes some spirit chear'd,
 Or Fancy charm'd their doubts away.
 As when old Æol's signal shrill
 Awakes the wind's intestine rage,
 And heard from high Olympus' hill
 Breathes the loud summons to engage.
 So the tide of frenzy rose,
 So the haughty wall they scale,
 Soon their oft repeated blows
 Shake the proud relentless jail. *

* The Bastile.

Hark ! again the pipe is heard,
 " Bring the engines, bring the flame."
Freedom thus her cohorts chear'd
 Hurrying on with loud acclaim.
 Soon the simple strain is lost,
 In Bellona's thund'ring sound ;
 Soon these walls, the tyrant's boast,
 In long ruin spread the ground.
 Now the shepherd swain is free,
 Loud resounds the plausive strain,
 From the bounds of Normandy
 To the Scandinavian main !
 When the sun begins his race
 Cynthia sinks in western gloom—
 Soon a King shall take his place
 And in woe his days consume.
 Soon a Queen shall mourn the day,
 Doom'd in durance long to sigh.
 Ah ! how dear a price ye pay,
 Ye who scorn'd the shepherd boy !—

VI.

But he that loves the wild extreme,
 To swell the soft breeze to a storm,
 And bid the gently winding stream
 With giant sweep the sylvan scene deform.
 Combin'd with him, whose jaundic'd eye,
 Hates ascending worth to spy ;

Their baleful arts combine
 To blast the great design.
 One in the cup of Freedom throws
 That infernal drug, which grows
 In the verge of Stygian gloom ;
 Foster'd by Cerberean foam,
 (Mingled with Echidna's gall,
 'Tis quaffed in Demogorgon's hall.
 Where by the gleam of moon-struck eyes
 Flashing o'er the nether skies.
 Riot's griev'd bands advance,
 And Anarchy conducts the dance.
 Chaos with his hundred choirs,
 Still the moody maze inspires.)
 The nations pledge it round and round,
 And deem the cup with blessings crown'd ;
 'Till the poison fires the veins,
 Strings the nerves and seethes the brains.

VII.

His brother fiend, to loose the ties
 That fasten mankind to the skies,
 Hastes the shepherd boy to find,
 Where, under shade, the youth reclin'd,
 Sitting, like a rural King ;
 His brother captives in a ring,
 Hail the hand that struck the blow
 Which laid the house of bondage low !

To him the wizard thus began :—

- “ Never will the rights of man
 “ Find a basis deep and broad,
 “ While the sons of *holy fraud*
 “ Hold their title by the charm ;
 “ Whose narcotic powers disarm
 “ Every function of the soul.
 “ By terrors feign’d above the pole,
 “ See them in their station high,
 “ Pretended Lords of earth and sky ;
 “ Dispensing life, dispensing death,
 “ In a breeze of mortal breath.
 “ Then they range in black array
 “ Guardians of despotic sway.
 “ Haste and drive them from their post,
 “ Haste ! or Liberty is lost !” *

VIII.

THE SWAIN believ’d, his pipe he blew,
 And soon appear’d the frantic crew.
 (For now the deep envenom’d bowl
 Had fir’d to madness every soul.)
 The fiend that came in Freedom’s mask,
 Urg’d them to the bloody task.
 Rapine shew’d the glittering spoil,
 The fruit of many an ages toil.


* See speeches of Dupont, and others, both in the Assembly and Convention of France.

Beneath the startled eye of noon,
Beneath the glimpses of the moon,
Their deeds profane the sacred light
And add new horrors to the night.—
But wand'ring muse, resign the lyre,
Such deeds would fright the virgin quire,
They ask a deeply plaintive string,
Strains that the hardest heart could wring.
Old Avon's matchless bard could paint alone
The bloody pall that hovers o'er the throne !—

* Written during the tryal of the late unfortunate King of Franco.

ON THE
BIRTH DAY
OF THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE ELIZABETH,
COUNTESS OF MOIRA, BARONESS
HASTINGS, &c. &c.

APRIL 10th, 1791.



THE tempests late, whose giant call *
Awoke the furies of the deep,
When Quiet fled, with ruffled pall
And wild Amazement banish'd sleep.
Are gone—and now, the white-wing'd hours
In peace pursue their trackless course.
No more the found'ring crews' despairing cry,
Nor woods resounding fall, nor torrents roar,
Nor the loud tumult of the plaintive shore
The chorus of the midnight hour supply.
Ill would those sounds and scenes become
That sacred, calm, and vernal night,
(Brooding o'er the tender bloom)
When first ELIZA saw the light.

* Written after a series of very tempestuous weather.

For no rude passions vex her soul,
 No darkness clothes that tranquil scene,
 In halcyon calm her moments roll
 And all is light and peace within :
 Except when Sympathy's too poignant dart
 Invades, with barbed shaft, the feeling heart.
 For, not in listless ease reclin'd
 This sublunary scene she views,
 But studies still to make, or find
 Fit means her virtues to diffuse :
 And tho' in dignity retir'd
 No more she deigns an earthly court to grace,
 Tho' stationary, still admir'd,
 The habitant adorns the place.
 Tho' lonely now, Eliza seems to mourn,
 Her sphere, of kindred minds, dispers'd afar,
 Soon shall the radiant *lights* again return
 And circle round the bright, maternal star.
 Yet, starting from its lucid sphere,
 † One lamp of love has found its way
 (SELINA ! check the falling tear !)
 To the fair dawn of heavenly day.
 Soon shall the constellation glow
 Attendant on the central throne.

* During a great part of this year, the family (except the Countess of Moira) were in England.

† Alluding to the death of the Hon. Lady S. F. Forbes, daughter to the Earl of Granard.

O may they each, in time, bestow

Light on a system of their own.

Then each in honour's radiant sphere enshrin'd,

May their sweet influence far, like her's, extend

Still bright'ning on from kindred mind to mind,

Till, like yon orbs above, their kindling virtues blend.

ON THE
B I R T H D A Y
OF THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE
COUNTESS OF MOIRA, BARONESS
HASTINGS, &c. &c.
APRIL 10th, 1792.

I.

W H I L E yet the messenger of spring
Faintly hails the rising year,
While yet with storms the forests ring
And the pale pleiads from their sphere,
For Nature's tints of vernal hue
Blank scenes of desolation view ;
While Discord loads the passing gale,
Or Sorrow's plaintive tones prevail :
While many a Prince of Bourbon's line
Lamenting roams along the Rhine,

Or wafts his plaints to Cæsar's throne,
 And calls his tardy legions on.
 Fate smiles severe, and mocks their trust,
 For Cæsar's * ear is stop'd with dust.—

The pitying muse the fading prospect sees,
 And from th' unreal scene her pinions plies
 To find where living virtue warms the breeze,
 And baffling the bleak year, perfumes the northern skies.

II.

† While BOURBON, yet a petty thane,
 Was lost in Gallia's martial train,
 And Austria's fires, unnam'd, unknown
 Their homage paid to Suevia's throne ;
 Champions of Heaven, renown'd in days of yore,
 Eliza's regal fathers brav'd the field,
 And sheath'd in arms, to Jordan's hallow'd shore,
 Led the long triumphs of the Red Cross shield ;
 Or by the claims of honour fir'd,
 Or in their country's cause inspir'd ;

* Alluding to the death of the Emperor Leopold.

† The first notice we find, in history, of the family of the Bourbon, is in the year 1381; when James de Bourbon, Count de la Marche, was sent against the Gascons, by John, King of France, and defeated. Their union with the Royal Family of Navarre (which opened their way to the crown of France) did not commence till about the end of the 15th century; whereas the branch of Hastings, by the medium of the family of Navarre, are descended in a right line from Charlemagne.—
 For an account of the family of Austria, see Sully's Memoirs, vol. I.
 b. I. Notes.

Call'd on their bands in harness bright
 Against some tyrant's lawless might.
 Their mild munificence, of heavenly birth,
 The fosterer of neglected worth,
 With all the kindred virtues, rais'd, refin'd,
 By circling Time's despotic sway,
 Are centred in their noble daughter's mind,
 Like gems, that drink abstracted light,
 Dawning thro' the waste of night ;
 Or round the flowing robe display'd,
 Or midst the locks of some distinguish'd maid,
 With mingled beams, salute the eye,
 The absence of the sun supply ;
 Or in his presence make a double day.

III.

And, while the fairies of the mine
 Below, shall course the wand'ring beam,
 And with the breded light combine
 The central, deep, chrystalline stream ;
 Still thine honour'd line shall live
 And propagate her worth along.
 Fair theme of many a future song !
 It boasts no frail, material source,
 Nor Nature's blind, and plastic force
 The genial power, that forms the MIND,
 The unspent energy assign'd.
 Thro' civil discord, calm repose,
 Thro' Nature's harmony and strife,

Still, still, it kindles as it goes
And gains new powers of light and life ;
And, with accelerated speed
Along the path, by Heaven decreed.
Still may the circling pomp its lustre lend
To many a plausive age to come !
Then, (when yon sun has quench'd his fires)
'Mongst the full empyreal choirs
In Heaven's eternal dome ;
At the dread consummating hour
Claiming their everlasting power,
May Heaven's great jubilee behold its winged virtues blend.

ON THE
BIRTH DAY
OF THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE ELIZABETH,
COUNTESS OF MOIRA, BARONESS
HASTINGS, &c. &c.

APRIL 10th, 1793.

IN midnight pomp, in Tamor's fairy hall,
(Her green stole for a mourning pall
Exchang'd) the queen of Eirin fate,
Pond'ring her isle's impending fate.
Her tuneless lyre was hung on high
Like a pale meteor in a gloomy sky ;
Her mute attendants stood around,
Lift'ning with dread the distant sound,
Where, must'ring all his factious tribes afar,
The fire of tempest call'd his sons to war ;
Mad Rebellion rode the flaw,
And loud Misrule, and scorn of law ;

From Gallia's strand, in dark ascent
 Their westward course the demons bent,
 And sent the foaming surge before
 Dashing on Ierne's shore.

" Fling your spells ! ye sylphid train !

" O'er the land, and o'er the main.

" Concord ! on your halcyon car,

" Mount, and meet the coming war.

" Ere yon loud Æolian band

" Smite my harp with frantic hand,

" And rudely wakes the descant loud

" That calls to arms the madding crowd."

In vain the Queen her prayers addrest,

Howling o'er the starless waste,

The coming tempest wing'd with fate,

Wafts along its gloomy freight ;

And round the roof, with awful sweep

Sends its voice, in cadence deep.

Yelling thro' the rocking dome,

Faction's fiend, on sounding wing,

Twangs the high-suspended string,

The signal to his sister Gnome.

His sister Gnome the signal heard,

And soon the flag of mischief rear'd ;

While Strygian lungs the pipe inspir'd,

Which the rude revolvers fir'd,

Around in gloomy ambuscade,

Peopling thick the waving shade

In hordes, they plot th' intended wrong,
 Or sweep the plain, an hideous throng.
 The frightened moon their march beholds
 And in deep clouds her vestal charms enfolds.
 To TAMOR's hall, with mast'ring powers
 The rebels point their midnight course ;
 The Queen beheld, with terror pale,
 Their ensigns, fluttering to the gale,
 And heard them, round the 'leaguer'd wall
 With menace loud for entrance call.
 " Oh ! reach yon harp," with loud exclaim
 The Queen began, " its magic frame
 " Shall echo that imperial strain,
 " At whose deep charm the rebel train
 " Shall drop their arms, and speed away
 " Like night, before the shafts of day !—
 " Touch the soul-commanding string,
 " Ye fairies ! form a shadowy ring,
 " And chant those names, whose potent spell
 " The deadly pest can yet dispell ;
 " Can rescue the insulted laws,
 " And bid the march of Horror pause !—
 " *Their* virtues guard the threat'ned land,
 " *Their* worth arrests the flaming brand !
 " ELIZA first, for *her* alone
 " The humanizing arts their lov'd protectress own ;
 " Those favour'd arts, which charm'd of yore
 " The savage tribes on HEBRUS shore.

" When Orpheus touch'd the sacred wire,
 " And the wild passions own'd his lyre.
 " Her name perfumes the northern air,
 " Where sav'd from want and chill despair,
 " By the bounteous plans design'd
 " In her bright expansive mind.
 " * The swains, who mourn'd their way-ward lot,
 " New tracks of industry are taught ;
 " Where her ready steps she turns,
 " Deep distress no longer mourns.
 " Where her smiles the prospect clear,
 " Anguish dries the falling tear.
 " The muse in her protection slumbers,
 " Time shall wake her magic numbers ;
 " When the fated round complete
 " Shall bid awake the descant sweet,
 " Echoing thro' this gladsome hall
 " When other tribes shall hear the call,
 " And at the charm, the nameless clan,
 " Shall drop the savage, and resume the man !"
 Soon, ere half the song was heard,
 The dark invasion disappeared ;
 Faction's hand her banner furls
 Discord all her snakes uncurls,

* Plans for new manufactures in the linen branch, recommended
 and encouraged by the Countess of Moira.

The bugle blows a swift retreat,
And back, "with many twink'ling feet,"
They scud along the moonlight lawn
Like elves before the rosy dawn.

TO
CHARLES WILLIAM BURY, ESQ.

ON HIS
RETURN FROM ITALY, 1789.

I.

BENEATH some mould'ring wall's imperial frown,
Or, by some river's flow'ry side,
Of old, in Punic crimson dy'd.
While, thro' the umbrage of the vale,
 In liquid accents sweet
 Dancing on silver feet,
Her naiads tell the glorious tale ;
And, as they seek the neighb'ring deep,
Some ancient warriour seem to weep,
And many a martial form, of gray renown,
Seen by Fancy's kindling eye,
Sweeps in shadowy cohorts by ;
Where the mimic eagles gleam
O'er the broad, translucent stream,

Engag'd with some CAMPANIAN friend
 Late, Imagination view'd
 Your gently winding footsteps bend.
 Then when thy generous grief began to swell
 O'er these fair scenes, by Gothic rage defac'd,
 O'er the depopulated waste
 Where tyranny delights to dwell.
 While deeper pangs the bosom wrung,
 Of thy sad friend, forbid, with liberal tongue,
 His native scandal to proclaim
 And propagate Hesperia's shame,
 And patriot schemes in vivid colouring wrought,
 Engag'd thy kindling thought.
 Tracing thy steps, from land to land,
 The hasty courier to thy hand
 At last, the welcome mandate bore,
 That call'd thee to thy native shore.
 Thy friend, with sympathetic joy
 Thy transport seem'd to share ;
 But sad Remembrance, to his eye,
 Recall'd the bitter tear.
 " Thee, perhaps, thy country claims,
 " To rank among those noble names,
 " Whom the *free* voice of millions call,
 " To think, and act, and speak for all ;
 " To bless the state with equal laws,
 " And earn a people's just applause :

" While we, whom erst the world ador'd
 " Lords of the balance and the sword ;
 " Who crush'd the proud, the suppliant sav'd,
 " And in *his* cause the despot brav'd,
 " In vain the awful name assume,
 " In vain, the pride of ancient Rome,
 " Tho' doom'd to muse, in deep despair
 " On those proud signs of what we were."—
 —Go then, my friend ! to glory go,
 Our flowery lawns yield to your hills of snow.
 " Old Aneo's * wreaths, on other shores bestow'd,
 " Perhaps, shall grace the power that rules the Libnian †
 flood."—

II.

By no vain hope inspir'd, we hail,
 The winds that brought thee to thy native shores ;
 Already to the vernal gale
 We saw thy virtues spread their blooming stores.—
 —Thy former day of triumph long is past,
 Since mounted on the dry and rigorous blast
 Which all the congregated vapours hurl'd,
 Voluminous, o'er the vast Atlantic world ;
 And left behind a cloudless ray
 That flash'd intolerable day.
 The minister of vengeance rode sublime,
 Changing our genial skies to Gombroon's arid clime. ‡

* A river in Italy.

† The Liffey.

‡ The remarkable dry spring, 1784, when Tullamore was burned.

Hovering o'er the deep serene
 He view'd our fields of fading green ;
 And heard the gentle naiads mourn,
 Their tuneless banks, and dusty urn ;
 But, when on that devoted town
 Doom'd to flames, an instant prey,
 He cast a look of sorrow down,
 He would have flung his phial far away.
 He would have wept—the burning sky
 Forbade the streaming grief to flow,
 He would have bade the zephyrs blow,
 To bring the welcome glooms again
 Settling o'er the azure plain ;
 And many a look he cast around
 The wide horizon's sea-girt bound,
 To spy the showery bow —
 —But Fate forbade—for now beneath,
 By Eurus' unrelenting breath
 Conceiving life; the seeds of fire
 O'er the crackling roofs aspire ;
 And high the fuming columns rise
 Dark'ning half the radiant skies,
 While shrieks of matrons rend the air,
 And hurrying crowds, in deep despair,
 Some, from the scene of horror fly
 Some, the scanty stream supply ;
 Some, by love, or friendship led
 The blazing beams undaunted tread,

The screaming infant thence convey
 Or bear the precious bales away.—
 WHEN, o'er the desolated scene
 The melancholy morning springs
 But “not with healing on her wings,”
 Thro' the late jocund street, with rueful mein
 The bankrupt crowd dejected strays,
 And each the hideous change surveys;
 And each—with many a mournful pause between—
 His loss recounts—and not in vain,
 Soon the prospect smiles again;
 Soon their LORD's benignant hand
 Bids their former hopes expand.
 With better omens bids the roofs ascend, *
 With better hopes, the peopled streets extend.—
 —Of burning towns let venal poets sing,
 When blood and ruin marks the victor's way,
 But Fame, exulting, as she spreads the wing,
 Towards the realms of empyrean day
 Dips thy medallion in the rising flame
 And to succeeding times † anneals her Bury's name!

IV.

Breathe no more! thou vengeful blast!
 The fiery tryal now is past!

* Mr. B. distributed among the sufferers a very considerable sum of money.

† *Annealing* is the art of fixing colours in painting, by means of fire.

* Vulcan yields to Xanthus now,
 See—elate with awful brow,
 Where the great † Milesian Nile
 Leaning on his sculptur'd urn
 Broods o'er his future sway,
 And calls his subject founts to day
 To bid the various prospect smile.

From every green hill round
 They hear the potent sound,
 And meditate their glittering march afar
 In humble tendance on his pearly car.
 While, far within his deep majestic grot,
 With all his blue-ey'd race, in council nigh,
 He shows the watry powers, with wonder caught
 Their future course beneath a distant sky
 In magic mirror seen, the shadowy prospect charms ;
 They see the progress of the humid train ;
 Thro' the deep glen, o'er the plain ;
 Thro' solemn groves, and smiling farms
 Slowly glides the welcome sail,
 Changing the produce of the vale,
 For all the variegated store
 That commerce wafts from every distant shore.
 Yon walls, that felt the dire vulcanian blast
 Where erst the flame-rob'd God in vengeance past,

* See the contest between Vulcan and the River God, in Homer.

† The branch of the New Canal, designed to pass by Tullamore.

Shall feel the gentle wave that murmurs round,
 Heal her disastrous scars, and close the fiery wound.
 Gladly the sedge-crown'd God shall grant the boon,
 Won by the charms of that sequester'd maid,
 Who rests at noon in yonder glade ;
 Or steals away, beneath the rising moon,
 To tend her * Clodia's deep romantic stream ;
 Or, from yon dewy rising lawn
 To mark, beneath the purpling dawn
 The sister lakes † responsive gleam,
 Or, low reclin'd in ‡ yonder cave
 List'ning to the dashing wave,
 When the red autumnal star
 Calls her dark levies to the watry war.

* The river which runs thro' Charleville, near Tullamore, the seat of Mr. Bury.

† The new and old Lake in the demesne of Charleville.

‡ The Grotto.

F I N I S.

V E R S E S,

LEFT AT

THE REV. PETER TURPIN'S,

AT

BROOKVILLE, IN HIS ABSENCE, FEB. 7th, 1792.

AH! Flora! why this dead repose?
Awake and leave thy wintry tomb!
And will no breathing sweets disclose
To welcome *Love* and Hymen home?
How would I bribe (if songs could buy)
The seasons blessings here to join,
I'd proudly share the owner's joy,
For *he* would sympathize with *mine*!
Did I possess Golconda's store,
And all the wealth of rich Cathay,
I'd wish him neither less nor more,
Than what would give his virtues play.

* Written about the time of Mr. T's marriage.

But had I sage * Alcina's voice,
 No breeze I'd call, no genial show'r,
 Yet soon a green alcove should rise
 To vie with Adam's nuptial bow'r.
 Yon beeches should expel the day,
 Yon borders long should breathe perfume,
 Yon mount that mourns the sun's delay
 Should rival Hybla's May-morn bloom.
 Yon elmy skreen that skirts the lawn,
 Should wave aloft, a solemn grove
 And seem an ample curtain drawn,
 To shield the seat of peace and love.
 Had I Aftolfo's magic horn
 That chac'd the fiends with potent sound,
 No pest, on blighting pinion borne
 Should ever pass the hallow'd bound.
 " Check thy poetic flights, my friend,"
 QUINTILIO cry'd, and press'd my hand,
 " No magic bow'rs need here ascend,
 " No visionary blooms expand.
 " Here some *perennials* still remain,
 " If poets would vouchsafe to mind 'em :
 " Yonder they deck your friend's demesne,
 " Had you but eyes, you'd quickly find 'em.
 " Here Gilead's balm, and Sharon's rose,
 " Mingle, at morn, their fragrant breath ;

* An Enchantress in Ariosto.

† See Ariosto.

" Yonder their op'ning blooms disclose,

" Like *Piety* and spotless *Faith*.

" That flower, which never opes its breast,

" Till dews descend, and stars appear,

" Is pity for the wretch distressed,

" Unfolding at the falling tear.

" In colours warm ; exuberant, full,

" Here FRIENDSHIP meets the ruffling gale."

And there in sober tints, and cool,

JUDGMENT, the pansie of the dale,

From Tyber and Ilyssus brought ;

Some noble Scions deck the soil

Assembled in yon shelter'd spot,

They cast around a general smile.

Here Roman spirit, Attic sense,

Innoxious wit, and social mirth

Around their mingled sweets dispense,

Nor shame their old, illustrious birth.

Would summer's transient blooms compose

Connubial crowns with these to vie ?

Then chide not Flora's dead repose

Nor blame the rigour of the sky.

When driving winds and beating rain,

The wintry prospect round deform

Their vivid tints will still remain,

Their scent exhaustless ever charm.

F I N I S.

TO
JOSEPH COOPER WALKER, ESQ.
M. R. I. A.

AND
MEMBER OF THE ACADEMIES OF PERTH, CORTONA,
AND ROME,
ON HIS EMBARKING FOR ITALY, 1791.

HOR. LIB. I. ODE 3.
Sic te Diva potens Cypri
Sic fratres Helenæ, lucida Sidera
Ventorumque regat Pater, &c.

MAY the * twin sons of Music, and Empress of Love,
The genii of Eirin, preside o'er your way ;
May your vessel be built from Calliope's grove,
And her sisters, turn'd sea-nymphs, the pageant convey.

May the sovereign of storms, in his gloomy bastile,
Confine every gale, but the soft-breathing west,
Till gentle † Parthenope lave the swift keel,
And the green shores of Italy hail their new guest.

* Castor and Pollux, the sons of Leda and Jupiter, in the form of a swan, supposed, in the Mythological System, to preside over voyages.

† The ancient name of the bay of Naples.

May the * minstrels of Eirin, from Lethe's lone strand,
 By you re-conducted, to † Virgil resign,
 In a full sounding pæan, that elegant hand,
 Whose well-woven chaplet their temples entwine !

For, not like a thoughtless, young spendthrift he goes,
 For trifles, to barter his morals, or fame,
 But to find, where the sisters of science repose
 And relume on our shores, the Pierian flame.

The humblest of bards, but the warmest of friends,
 For many a social, and classical day
 This slender memorial of amity sends,
 Where friendship, not genius, awakens the lay.

* History of the Irish Bards, by Mr. Walker.

† Virgil's Tomb stands near Naples.

TO
JOSEPH COOPER WALKER, ESQ.
M. R. I. A. &c. &c.

ON HIS
RETURN FROM THE CONTINENT, Oct. 1792.

I.

THE muse, that on thy parting prow,
Her votive tablet laid,
And fill'd the gale, that on thy streamers play'd,
With many a fervent, heartfelt vow.—
Like the night-warbling bird, that 'plains
Her absent mate, in melting strains ;
Now, as the soaring lark that meets the morn,
(Had she her fluent note,) would sing thy wish'd return !

II.

You saw the martial pageant spread,
Along proud Rhine's pavilion'd shore ;
You saw the tempest lift its head,
Where, in terrific slumbers glowing,
(The fullen East the signal blowing)
You spy'd th' exterminating fire ; *

* Mr. Walker visited the camp of the Confederates in the summer
of 1792.

You heard the thunders, muttering long, conspire
To roll the trembling nations o'er.—

While vengeance seem'd to load the gale,
Which brought the threat'ning gloom afar ;
And, while o'er Belgia's wat'ry pale
In rude shock of alternate war.
Contending nations, won and lost,
The batter'd wall, the bloody post ;
And death, between the Maese and Rhone,
O'er gasping legions roll'd his moving throne.

III.

WHAT spell, by gifted wizard wrought,
Thro' that long pass of perils brought
My friend ?—What secret prayers had power
To ward the dangers of the hour ?—
What still, small voice was heard so high,
When Discord shook the vaulted sky ;
When royal threats, and clamours loud,
Sent from the wild, misgovern'd crowd,
In general peal was heard to swell,
And * Blasphemy, with Stygian yell,
Seem'd to call down the bolt of Fate
To sweep from earth the guilty state ?—
—It was the ORPHANS † pious prayer,
That rose, like incense, on the air,

* See the speeches of DUPONT, and other members of the National Assembly and Convention of France.

† See HINTS for the Education of Female Orphans, &c. by Mr. Walker.

And, thro' the congregated gloom,
 Fraught with woe, and clogg'd with crimes,
 (Where millions seem'd to read their doom)
 Sprung up to those Elysian climes,
 Where high above the mad debate,
 Virtue's guardian holds his state;
 Nor was the seraph slow to send
 A convoy to the ORPHANS' FRIEND.

IV.

'Cross the martial pomp it goes,
 Thro' horrent spears, and glittering files,
 And where the Suevian ensign glows,
 Nor at the dreaded scene recoils.
 The * RED CROSS Knight the vanward leads,
 A train of fainted dames succeeds;
 While † Britomart, with awful charms,
 Moves behind, in lucid arms.
 The trumpets pause, the clarions cease,
 Bellona sinks in fullen peace,
 While, amid the transient calm
 Rises the slowly-chanted psalm.
 Th' unbodied choirs respondent share
 The praise of him, whose pious care,
 For their forsaken, friendless race,
 Life's various chart has deign'd to trace,

* The Patron of Religion. See SPENSER, Legend the first.

† Patroness of Chastity. SPENSER, Legend the third.

And mark'd the shoals, and shifting sand,
 And currents, with a master's hand.
 SUCH was your guard, thro' fields of gore,
 With you they left the Celtic shore,
 And with mild gales thy canvass bend
 Propitious to the ORPHANS' FRIEND.

V.

ERE yet to graver tasks confin'd,
 Thy nascent energy of mind
 Reviv'd the harmony of Tamor's hall,
 (Silent for many an age)
 And in thy classic page *
 O'er her fallen poets flung a richly figur'd pall.
 Why need I tell the plans thy genius drew
 To rouse her slumbering sister† at the view.
 What scenes, to charm her from the tomb?—
 What spells, to break her cloister'd gloom?—
 O may thy public spirit, fraught
 With all that FLORENCE knew and taught;
 With all that BUONAROTTI dar'd,
 With all of Heaven that RAFFAELLE shar'd.
 With GUIDO's grace, and ROSA's fire,
 Brood o'er the formless mass,
 The noble outline trace,
 And bid the glowing seeds of genuine art conspire!

* Mr. W's History of the Irish Bards.

† See a plan published by Mr. Walker, for the encouragement of
 Painting in Ireland.

TO
WILLIAM PRESTON, ESQ.
ON HIS
TRAGEDY,
ENTITLED
DEMOCRATIC RAGE.

I.

WHAT mighty spirit wing'd thy way
Thro' mingling storms of loud misrule,
And bade thee send the shaft of day
Thro' the deep gloom of Faction's school?—
Who taught thy keen and stedfast eye,
The orgies of the fiends to spy;
And catch the forms, with rapid glance,
Circling in the moon-struck dance?
Who gave the power, with "ken profound,"
The gulf of Bourbon's * soul to sound;
His bosom fiend, † and stern Marat,
Exulting o'er dismember'd law?

* Orleans.

† Robespierre.

Did MILTON lend the daring plume,
 That swept, of old, the Stygian gloom,
 Where, thron'd amidst the eternal jar,
 Chaos calls his clans to war.
 Thy friend, who mark'd of old, thy matin ray,
 The splendour of thy noon exults to view ;
 Long may the radiance of thy coming day,
 With propagated light its course pursue !

II.

The muse that trenchant weapon gave
 (Temper'd in Aganippe's stream,
 And edg'd with TRUTH's eternal beam)
 That mark'd Medusa for the grave.
 Like PERSEUS, * on his plummy steed,
 On Pegasus wing you soar'd,
 When late, from lasting durance freed,
 The monster rear'd her form abhorr'd.
 And (as the fiend's petrific glance,
 Was not for mortal eye to view)
 From that pure buckler's bright expanse,
 (Which Fancy gave) the veil you drew.
 And there the Gorgon image caught,
 Then, (how to aim the speeding blow,

* In Mythologic History, Perseus is represented, before he attacked the Gorgon (whose sight was supposed to turn her beholders into stone), as viewing her image in the mirror of his shield, and learning thence how to take his aim.

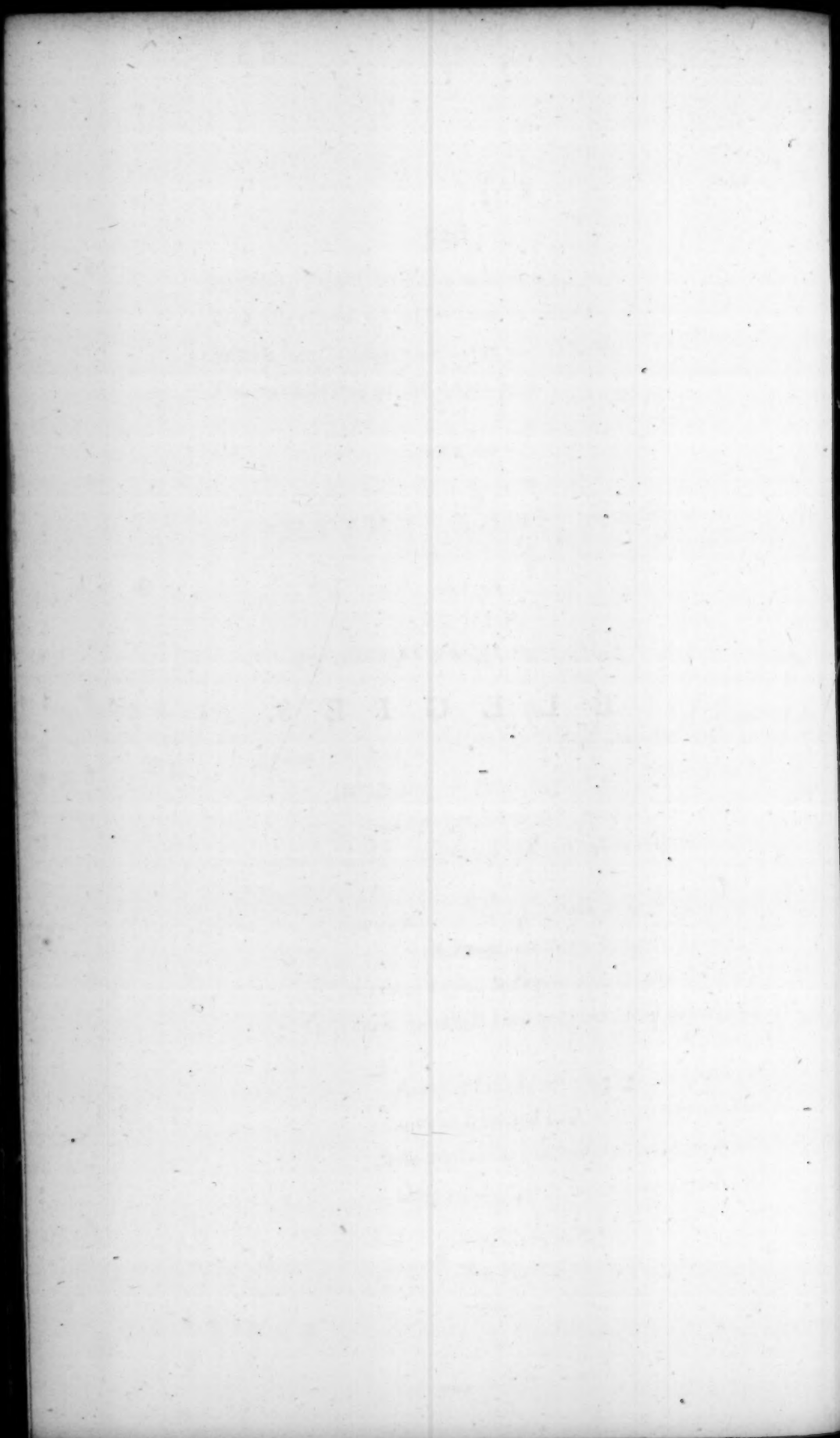
By the reflecting mirrour taught,)
 Dismiss her to the shades below.
 Thy daring hand the snaky tresses held,
 And hung the pale, expiring features high,
 A warning to those favour'd isles reveal'd,
 Like a dire comet, in an evening sky.

III.

'Twas not alone to foster Mirth,
 Or sooth a dull and vacant hour,
 The muse was sent to visit earth,
 Gifted with more than mortal power.
 (Tho' such is deem'd her humble trade,
 Among the sordid sons of Clay,)
 But when foul mists the mind invade,
 And passions cloud the mental day.
 When Licence lifts her Gorgon face,
 In the fair mask of Freedom drest ;
 And calls her miscreated race
 To share the Bacchanalian feast.
 When torpid Reason seems to stand,
 Deploring her insulted laws,
 The muse with light'ning arms *her* hand,
 And bids her vindicate her cause.
 This was her boast, in years of yore,
 When honours due adorn'd her name ;
 And, shall she wake on Liffey's shore,
 Without her meed, the patriot's flame ?

Forbid it, Pride ! let Eirin learn at last,
With due esteem the muses boon to prize ;
Seldom such blessings come, and part in haste,
The rarest bounty of the frugal skies.

E L E G I E S.



TO THE
REV. JOHN SMYTH,*

ON THE
DEATH OF A YOUNG FRIEND, 1779.

THO' Heaven with sacred sorrow wounds thy heart;
Tho' bleeding Friendship claims the falling tear,
While, new to woe, her agonizing smart,
Seems to thy tender feelings too severe.

Yet learn, fond youth! with reverential awe,
The secret steps of Providence to scan:
Learn by what mystic ways she deigns to draw
To opening bliss, her wayward creature, man.

She sow'd the genuine virtues in thy breast,
Nor was the copious seed bestow'd in vain,
The generous crop the hand of culture blest,
And Alma's care matur'd the golden grain.

* Now of Liverpool.

Soon learn'd thy breast with others joy to glow,
 Nor sick'ning Envy damp'd the rising flame;
 For others too it felt the shaft of woe,
 And own'd, with more than words, the wretches claim.

Heaven sent a friend—Heaven saw thy op'ning worth,
 Reflecting full, a stronger tint receive,
 His fires responsive call'd thy ardours forth,
 And meeting hearts a mutual impulse gave.

Thy feelings soon the strong attraction knew,
 Soon learn'd, with his, to shift their changeful air,
 In social joy, they took a livelier hue,
 Or mimic'd sad the sober tint of Care.

Thro' Learning's mazy course, with him, you ran,
 Travers'd, with him, "her studious cloisters pale,"
 When now the smiling boy, chastis'd by man,
 His friendship felt with nobler ardour swell.

Heaven mark'd the hour—and bade thy friend depart,
 Ere yet the world had dimm'd his chearful eye;
 With *him* she claims thy sympathizing heart,
 And bids thy kindling soul affect the sky.

With what regret thine angel-friend beholds,
 Thine humble sorrows, grovelling on the earth,
 And blames afar, the fullen orb, that rolls
 So tardy on, to bring thy second birth.

Then weep no more, nor grieve his fainted breast,
 With wayward grief, and earthly cares profane ;
 Let no fond sighs disturb his sacred rest,
 Nor cares for thee his holy raptures stain.

Nor dream how immature his virtues fell,
 Unripen'd, crude, beneath the spoiler's hand ;
 Ere yet the generous fruit had learn'd to swell,
 By suns matur'd, by genial breezes fann'd.

See yon fair tree, beneath November's flaw,
 How low it lies, from yonder bank uptorne,
 Its stem no more the genial juice shall draw,
 Nor May's sweet blossoms deck its boughs forlorn.

Yet, had it stood, the pride of many a spring,
 And moonlight fairies danc'd around the shade ;
 Some hand had dar'd an alien bough to bring,
 And to the alliance strange its youth betray'd.

Then his degenerate brood, with fruitless tears,
 The fire, perhaps, had mourn'd, but mourn'd in vain ;
 Inglorious then, beneath a weight of years,
 Slow had he sunk, the burthen of the plain.

Some fostering hand, perhaps, misled by love,
 Had borne it hence, to some less genial soil,
 Taught it to scorn its old, paternal grove,
 Its planter's tender care, and pious toil.

Or all the sad, ill-omen'd birds of night,
 Had tamely perch'd his weeping boughs among;
 The baleful troop had thither bent their flight,
 And claim'd its fruits to pay their boding song.

Or, bid to deck some foreign idol's shrine,
 Prun'd to fantastic forms, it long had stood;
 While tasteless Vandals hail'd the low design,
 Or bent, with hands profane, the hallowed wood.

Then weep no more—*His* branches wave sublime
 To other gales, and shade a richer mould;
 While fruits that scorn the tardy lapse of time,
 Deck his unfading boughs, with rip'ning gold.

F I N I S.

H E N R I E T T A,

A

M O N O D Y,

ON THE

D E A T H

OF

MISS HENRIETTA FRANCES DIGBY,

OF

G E A S H I L L,

DAUGHTER OF THE

REV. WILLIAM DIGBY,

DEAN OF CLONFERT, 1780.

THE character of the excellent young Lady whose name is prefixed to the following lines, may seem, to those who did not know her, a little verging on romance, but those who had the happiness of being her intimates, will at once perceive, that they are a faithful, but very inadequate, record of a few—very few of her virtues and accomplishments. UNCOMMON characters are often marked by some singularity, but hers was an exception; her distinguished piety had no tincture of formality nor moroseness, her various literary acquisitions were unfulled by affectation, and her habitual cheerfulness the result of that peace within, “which nothing earthly gives nor can destroy,” made her society the delight of all who knew her.

H E N R I E T T A,

A

M O N O D Y.

WHAT envious hand has twice profan'd my bower,*
My myrtle bow'r, with slips of baleful yew,
E'er April's sweets had twice adorn'd the vale,
Or call'd the primrose pale,
To mix her odorous scents with zephyrs new?
Was it for this I left yon mountains blue,
Where harsher seasons rule the bleak domain?
For this, ye nymphs, I heard your gurgling rills,
Invite me down the gentle vale with you,
To taste the softer breezes of the plain.
With you to rove among the sunny hills,
Or indolently laid, remote from view,
To court the woodland muse, with jocund reed,
And never more the sorrowing strain renew?

* The elder Miss Digby had died about a year before;—shortly after the author's acquaintance with the family commenced.

Ah, Henrietta ! much I hop'd for thee,
 With other notes to wake the woodland choir,
 When Time had seen thy full-blown charms entire,
 Transplanted hence, to deck another mold,
 Had seen thy virtues hold ;
 Their tenour, bright'ning on for many a year,
 But Heav'n forbids the tear ;
 Heaven saw, perhaps, some dim disafter wait,
 Far in the bosom of futurity,
 And kindly seal'd the seeming stern decree !

Thine was the blooming wreath of early worth,
 And every choicest boon that Heaven bestows ;
 No dark contagion check'd them in the birth,
 Untainted, fair, the vigorous stems arose :
 Not such as aged Penitence uprears,
 A puny growth, besprent with sickly tears,
 When half the vigour of the soul is flown !
 Ye parents hear, and mark the warning song,
 Time, as he steals along,
 And marks the infant mind, with weeds o'ergrown,
 Shakes the hoar head, and waves th' impeaching scroll,
 Then hurries frowning to th' eternal goal.

Fair soul ! it was not half thine early praise,
 That every ornamental grace was thine,
 The vivid pencil and the chorded shell,
 Whatever charms, in these degenerate days,

That unexhausted mine,
 Seen only by thy brethren of the skies,
 Was hid from common eyes !
 Thy soul, was all harmonious as thy lyre,
 * Thy lyre, attun'd to David's leading strain,
 Or Asaph's lute, when full of heavenly fire,
 The anthem swell'd beneath his skilful hand,
 And halleluias loud, were heard to ring,
 Revolving, length'ning thro' the choral band.

Warm Faith, and Hope, inspir'd thy angel song,
 'Twas *Faith* that bade thy infant hand explore
 The sacred leaves, and trace their sense along ;
 While on the lap reclin'd of flow'ry May,
 Thine equals languish'd out the livelong day,
 Or led the dance, or dar'd, devoid of fear,
 To weave the amorous snare ;
 'Twas THEN, when all enjoy'd the social hour,
 The seraph HOPE, in faintly stole array'd,
 Oft led thee forth, to some sequester'd bow'r,
 To talk, with her, of heavenly things unseen,
 Where she and angels shar'd the hallow'd shade ;
 'Twas there, alas ! from this sublunar scene,
 † At the stol'n hour, the sad divorce was made.

* She was a great proficient in music, and remarkably fond of sacred poetry.

† She often used to retire from company to her private devotions.

Not always thus, in lonely bow'r immur'd,
 Meek Charity ! thy soul expanding beam,
 Found thy sweet pupil lost to human ties,
 Reckless of earth, conversing with the skies ;
 From Want's pale eye, from Pity's melting claim,
 And Poverty's imploring call, secur'd ;
 With ready ear, she heard the orphans pray'r,
 With stealthy hand, she dealt the lib'ral boon,
 And priz'd the power, to wipe the widows tear,*
 O'er all the joys that fleet beneath the moon ;
 O'er all that charms the eye, or sooths the ear.
 For what are ye, ye transient gifts of Time,
 Compar'd with those that scorn the wasting year,
 Gifts from above, immortal as their clime ;
 When the warm impulse to the soul is given,
 That bids her think of Heaven ;
 When first th' unshackled soul is taught to soar,
 And launches from this dull, disastrous shore,
 A virgin, tracing out her upward course ?—
 Ye living precepts ! come ! my song attest,
 That still survive, and warm the grateful breast.

For well she lov'd the PASTOR's hallow'd trade,
 Nor thought it much, to raise with gentle hand,

* Whatever pecuniary present the young lady received, she either distributed among the poor, or bought religious books, for the instruction of the young and ignorant in the neighbourhood.

* The lamb, deserted in the thorny glade,
 Or on the barren strand,
 At random cast, of mother's care forlorn,
 Nor Indolence, nor Scorn,
 Forbad the nymph, her orphan charge to tend,
 To ward the weakly wretch, from nightly spell;
 For she had charms to counterwork the guile,
 Of dæmon imp, and all the elvish train,
 Given by that ancient swain,
 Who bade the fisher leave his simple wile,
 And learn the mighty shepherd's flock to feed;
 † What time Tiberias' flood, from shore to shore,
 Heard the shrill summons of his vocal reed:
 From realm to realm, the thrilling call was heard,
 And alien flocks, a mighty train appear'd,
 Obsequious, list'ning to his magic lore.

Unusual theme! in these inglorious days,
 When the dim crosses, that whilom shone so bright,
 Scattering the fog of Superstition's night,
 So sickly seems to shed her waning light;
 And Irreligion, o'er her ancient right,
 The leaden sceptre sways!
 Yet deem'd ye not your pious labour lost,
 Blest pair! when o'er th' expiring faint ye hung,

* Alluding to her care in instructing the younger maid servants (particularly *one* who had been an orphan) in the principles of religion,

* Lake of Genaffaroth.

With all a parents woes, your bosoms wrung,
 And saw at once your fondest wishes crost !
 Not all the fading charms, by poets sung,
 Of ages, long expir'd, the empty boast,
 Could match the glories of thy dying bed !—
 Tho' HELEN's fatal charms, on Asia's coast,
 Kindled, of old, the flame of wasting war ;
 Tho' fierce Zenobia rul'd the rushing car,
 And Caria's* Queen the line of battle led.
 Tho' great Eliza saw th' eternal bar,
 Of dashing waves, defend her favour'd strand,
 And quench in storms, the flaming wrath of Spain :
 Where now are all the mighty deeds they plann'd,
 Their names, to more than half the world unknown,
 In some old minstrel's song, preserv'd in vain,
 Or on some fragment of a mouldering stone,
 Not such the portion of the silent train.
 Favour'd by him, who fills the sapphire throne,
 Who led them onward thro' the vale of pain,
 Tho' their hard brethren scarce the wand'ers own.
 For them the faints prepare the splendid seat,
 Far, far, above the guilty and the great.

MORE glorious far, to follow such a bier,
 And more your triumph, than in ermin'd pride
 To see her rais'd on Fortune's fickle sphere,
 With Flattery cringing by her chariot's side.

* Artemisa.

* And thou, sweet maid, who feel'st the knot unty'd,
 Which once united to thy faithful heart
 The lost companion of thy tuneful art,
 And mourn'st her fall, as some lone nightingale,
 Remote from view, the midnight groves among,
 With dying dirge renews her plaintive song,
 Tho' yet the recent pang thy heart assail,
 Tho' now thou tun'st a solitary string;
 Yet know, that still a sympathizing hand
 Attunes her virgin harp, to thine above,
 Among the choirs of love:

These choirs, whose anthem seem'd a while to stand,
 When thro' their bands was heard the summons loud:

"† Go bid the flaming car, thy call obey,
 " And half the burning seat, ye seraphs! shroud,
 " Dispensing gently round a milder ray,
 " When yon fair saint resigns her mortal veil;
 " Go gently soothe away her tender fears,
 " And waft her up the sky on softest sail."

The wond'ring saints lean'd forward from their spheres,
 To see th' unusual pomp ascend the skies;
 And from their thrones, the hero and the seer,
 Names which had long ennobled many a clime,
 The faint, the chief, the mighty, and the wise,
 Exclaim'd "sure some unwonted birth of time,
 " Some soul, whose morals warm'd a languid age,

* The late Mrs. Digby, then Miss Mary Digby.

* Alluding to the fever of which she died.

" Some holy pastor comes, from care releast,
 " Some gifted bard, or deep reflecting sage ;
 " Else why in haste, descends the fiery team,
 " Like that which bore the saint from Jordan's stream ?
 " No sage or moralist, " a voice rejoins,
 " No pastor late releast, the call obeys,
 " No gifted bard his earthly load resigns,
 " And claims his wreath of Amaranthine bays !
 " A simple maid, unsung by mortal lays."
 " In early youth, the blest assembly joins,
 " A fairer soul was ne'er dislodg'd by death,
 " Nor fought a purer mind the upward path.
 " Heaven on her soul its choicest gifts distill'd,
 " And blest with golden fruit the narrow span,
 " A few short years, with num'rous virtues fill'd
 " The genuine off'rings Heaven expects from man.
 " Early recall'd, to shew the thoughtless train,
 " Why still 'tis given the ling'ers to remain ;
 " And what important posts they fill below,
 " How short, how insecure, their giddy reign,
 " Then why, ye languid triflers, why so slow ?
 " Haste, seize the golden moments as they fly,
 " See ! how the fugitives ascend the sky.
 " Minute your faults, and chide the fond delay,
 " Protracted long by many a faint essay !"—
 —Thus sung the youth Ophalia's glades among,
 Tuning his ditty to the doleful knell,

Till now approaching near, the funeral throng,
Darken'd the hill, and pour'd adown the dell :
But when the plum'd hearse slowly pac'd along,
His smother'd woe began afresh to swell,
He turn'd him round, and wip'd the falling tear,
Then slowly sad, pursued the passing bier.

F I N I S.

ON THE DEATH

OF THE

REV. THOMAS STEWART,*

LATE RECTOR OF HOWTH, AND PREBEND OF
ST. PATRICK'S, DUBLIN, 1789.

I.

†YE groves! whose umbrage to the rising sun,
Romantic, falling o'er the dewy dell,
And shadowing half way up the hills majestic swell,
I us'd to mark, when Fancy first begun,
To muse with wild, creative eye,
On the rich scenes of earth and sky;
Or view the meek, retiring day,
Stealing in purple tints away;
Or, when the world was hush'd asleep,
And Dian climb'd the cloudless steep,

* Son to Wm. Stewart, Esq; of Killymoon.

† The scene of the Author's school-boy days was in the neighbourhood of Killymoon.

Listening, with delighted ear,
 The deep stream's solemn fall to hear.
 Oh, Fairy stream, along whose daisied shore,
 I first the rising rapture prov'd,
 When Milton's epic numbers mov'd
 The master chords of young delight,
 And brought all Heaven before my sight.
 Hark ! to yon deep-ton'd bell ! those pleasures are no more !

II.

—Ye glades, where oft in evening walk,
 Methought, I heard the Dryads talk ;
 Or seem'd to spy, at blush of day,
 The blue-stol'd naiads steal away,
 Before the sun's intruding eye,
 Their fairy gambols could espy.
 Ye hills ! who lock'd your long embrace,
 Round that lov'd, sequester'd place ;
 At whose majestic, mingled feet,
 Where Logri's stream, and Mona's meet,
 Stands the venerable dome,
 The good Palemon's ancient home ;
 " How your echoes seem to languish
 " Mute, but to the voice of anguish ! "

III.

Wizard stream ! unknown to song,
 That thro' old Loughrea's solemn wood,
 O'er rude rocks slingst thy foaming flood ;

Tho' soon, thy waters quiet maze,
 Thro' the lovely vale delays.
 (Lovely vale ! tho' still unsung,
 Unless some Doric reed obscure
 Piping near thy waters pure,
 Calls to dance the sylvan throng.)
 Along your hazle borders fair,
 How oft you heard the fervent prayer,
 And rustic vows, with holy strife,
 Ascending for the forfeit life !

IV.

Oh ! early fallen ! ere half your days were run !
 Long must I mourn thy unexpected doom ;
 Did thy full blossoms court the morning sun,
 So soon to fall and wither on thy tomb ?
 Was it for this, so oft you bent your way,
 With heaven-born charity, thy lov'd compeer ;
 And meek Humanity, an hermit gray,
 From Want and Pain to wipe the falling tear ?——
 Heedless of his lofty birth,
 Or proud of that sole title given,
 To dignify the race of earth,
 “ The delegate of bounteous Heaven.
 Scorning Ambition's wild career,
 The noisy bar, the tempting main,
 Where Av'rice spreads the sail for gain,
 Following the journies of the year.

He chose the shepherd's humble fold,
 He chose to guide the simple swain,
 Thro' the long sequester'd way,
 That leads to everlasting day.—
 —Long, long I have not seen that daisied shore,
 Yet *there* fond Memory loves at times to dwell;
 Haunts of my childhood! half your charms are o'er,
 Ye Fairy streams! and haunted woods! farewell!

V.

Her plunder'd nest the stock dove mourns,
 Her bright'ning day is soon o'ercast;
 But soon the tide of Hope returns,
 And his instinctive pangs are past.—
 Not so, the fond and virtuous pair,
 By Wisdom and Religion taught,
 Gently to rear the tender thought;
 And, (as the mind expands apace,)
 With every virtue, every grace,
 The tissue of the soul to blend,
 And raise the pupil to a friend.
Theirs is the pang—when in the zephyr's breath,
 The viewless messenger of death,
 While Hope and Joy are smiling round,
 Deals the dark insidious wound.
 Malignant Fate sits by and smiles,
 While yet the florid cheek and sparkling eye,

The hope of every friend beguiles,
 And promises a long arrear of joy.
 And hid beneath the placid mien,
 The subtle miner lurks unseen.

VI.

Theirs is the pang—but oh! much honour'd pair!
 Think not your pious, fond, parental care,
 Your early joy, your early boast,
 Your kind sollicitudes are lost!—
 —Old Time, a glad return will yield,
 To yonder hind that sows the field;
 Tho' now, to lawless chance a prey,
 He seems to fling his hopes away.
 —And shall the nobler toils that form the mind,
 Despair a due return to find,
 When he that tames th' unconscious clod,
 See tenfold gifts by Heaven bestow'd?
 No—your generous labours live,
 In brighter limes, they yet survive
 That power, which ripens earth to ore,
 Beneath Potofi's mountains hoar:
 That sees the sanguine ruby glow,
 In Golconda's gloom below;
 And bids a vagrant drop condense,
 An Orient pearl, with light intense;
 Shall behold thy labours crown'd,
 Tho' seeming sunk in night profound.

Check the tear's incessant fall,
 And your living hopes survey.
 A long procession bright and gay ;
 Led by him *, who nurs'd in arms,
 All alive to glory's charms,
 Fac'd the proud encroaching Gaul :
 And now the Senate sees him wield,
 Virtue's arms, in Freedom's field ;
 Remember still his gallant stand,
 With that high distinguish'd band,
 When Usurpation own'd her fear,
 And crouch'd beneath Juverna's spear.
 Thus your living hopes recall,
 And check the tears incessant fall.

* James Stewart, Esq; representative for the county Tyrone.—He made several campaigns in Germany, and behaved with uncommon intrepidity, when only a stripling.

F I N I S.

TO THE
REV. DR. LESLIE,
OF
TANDRAGEE, COUNTY DOWN,
ON

A LATE MELANCHOLY EVENT IN HIS FAMILY, 1792.

WOULD Heaven that Promethean art were mine,
To bid the languid look revive again ;
O could the magic of the muses line,
Lead health meand'ring thro' the seats of pain.

LESLIE ! that mind which feels for others smart,
For many a year had 'scap'd this cruel stroke,
Till Pity's self had wish'd the soul to part,
From Age's leaden gripe, and galling yoke.

While others skim'd along the vernal road,
Where fleeting pleasure led the hair-brain'd chace ;
She trac'd the dark vale to the lone abode,
Where anguish hid her pale, autumnal face.

Like the sweet bee, that from the dew-bent flower,
 Extracts the lymph, that crowns the cup of joy ;
 From grateful tears she drew her nectar'd store,
 Then with her freight complete, she sought the sky.

That glorious essence would'st thou wish to find,
 Here darkling fixt to mourn at others woe ;
 Heaven's denizen, to slavish task assign'd,
 To bid a purple current ebb and flow ?—

Fond Sympathy, indeed, that heart could warm,
 The glow of friendship, and domestic joy ;
 Hope's chearful tinge, on Sorrow's faded form,
 Seem'd all Elysium to her glitt'ning eye.

The Heavenly tenant of that gentle breast,
 Eternal vigour from the task inhal'd ;
 But, the frail lodging of th' empyreal guest,
 Sunk, by the siege of unseen foes assail'd.

Yet, what she was, in some distinguish'd hour,
 When meek Benevolence and Joy combin'd ;
 When thro' each look, with soul-enchanting power,
 Beam'd the pure essence of th' æthereal mind.

She now exceeds—Behold her where she moves,
 In the full noon of everlasting light !—
 Yon radiant crown each heavenly charm improves,
 With sapphires beam'd, unsufferably bright !

Yon gems, that sparkle o'er her flowing vest,
 Are grateful tears, in heavenly mines congeal'd ;
 While in the swelling anthems of the blest,
 Wond'ring, she hears, her modest worth reveal'd.

Wond'ring, she sees, in that resplendent robe,
 Emblazon'd by the pencil of the skies,
 Her deeds, while yet she walk'd this nether globe,
 Tended by fervent prayers, and glist'ning eyes.

THEE too, the crown and splendid robe attend,
 (If aught the muse beholds, of things above ;)
 Even now the texture grows, the colours blend,
 For other nuptials, midst the choirs of love.

The heavenly artist tends thy steps below,
 (An unseen form, but by the gifted sight,)
 Who, in the tints of Heaven's unfading bow,
 Sketches thy virtues, as they rise to light !

Swift pursuivants, the pictures waft away,
 Where, far above, the glorious texture grows,
 Glittering in bright diversities of day,
 And heavenly looms thy storied life compose.

Still grows the texture, may it long extend,
 Till thy late progeny thy virtues learn !
 Celestial visitant ! thy charge attend,
 And soothe with whispers bland, his deep concern !

Long may his fond, paternal eyes survey,
The fainter mother in the daughter smile;
And may the Author of this grateful lay,
From such a model learn to raise his style.

F I N I S.

ON THE
D E A T H
OF THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
SIR JOHN RAWDON,
LATE
EARL OF MOIRA,
JUNE, 1793.

NO venal bard, with personated pain,
And studied Sympathy's fictitious glow,
Prefumes to mingle with the mourning train,
Intrusive on their dignity of woe.

Not many moons have taught the azure tide,
In deeper deluge on our shores to roll,
Since, in that social circle, he enjoy'd
"The feast of Reason, and the flow of soul."

That gloomy warning of the sinking mind,
(Which oft forebodes, when heaven-sent ills impend)
With dumb, internal prophecy, divin'd,
(Ere Rumour spoke) the parting of a friend.

Pensive I sit, and ask the midnight breeze,
 How *SHE* supports the shock, that sever'd life;
 And Fancy still, in mournful vision, sees
HER feelings, and her fortitude at strife.

Oh! how with soft Solicitude she strove,
 To draw the barbed shaft of length'ned pain;
 To smooth his couch, with kind, connubial love,
 And gild the gloom of Sorrow's dark domain!

What need for *her* such deep and poignant woe?
 Must she?—but Heaven forbids to scan our fate,
 Nor yet allows the various ends to know,
 For which she proves us, in this mortal state.

Support her, Heaven! for *SHE* that feels for all,
 As spirits feel, from earthly dregs refin'd:
 How was she startled at the awful call?
 How bore the lacerations of the mind?

Support her, Heaven! for thou alone canst shed
 That holy balm, that heals th' internal wound;
 And bid th' enlight'ned soul, devoid of dread,
 Look o'er the gloomy world's mysterious bound.

To those, whose converse most *HE* lov'd below,
 The great, the good, the useful, and the wise,
 Who here vouchsaf'd a visit to bestow,
 Their fated task perform'd, and fought the skies.

For not like gaudy insects of an hour,
 Who waste in trifles, Time's penurious boon ;
 He learn'd to manage well the frugal dower,
 And liv'd whole ages in a single moon.

* To that fair morn, when first the sun look'd forth,
 His mind, pursuing up the maze of time,
 Saw social Life, and Science, in their birth,
 And mark'd, with studious eye, their march sublime.

The lamp he lighted, by Experience given,
 At those twin stars that glimmer'd o'er the waste ;
 And, like Prometheus, dealt the boon of Heaven
 Around, and show'd the *future* in the *past*.

From this, he learn'd the dignity of man ;
 From this, his duties, and his claims he knew ;
 And, from the study of the mighty plan,
 The richest stores of mingled knowledge drew.

His polish'd manners spread a social ease,
 Round the gay circle of his festal board ;
 Even in the lap of pain, he strove to please,
 Improv'd the subject, or the theme restor'd.

He lov'd the muse : his kind, protecting hand,
 Cherish'd her labours with parental care :

* His Lordship's literary acquisitions exhibited an extent and variety which marked a great comprehension and activity of mind, and a memory uncommonly tenacious.

He strove to plant the arts on Eirin's strand,
And hop'd to see them brave the rigorous air.

'Twixt Faction's frenzy, and imperial power,
He took, like PUBLIUS,* his determin'd stand,
With Roman spirit fraught, and Attic lore,
Full in the vaward of the patriot band.

His shield has left its place, in Tamor's hall;
His column strip'd of all its scutcheon'd pride.—
—But HASTING's arms, with his, shall deck the wall,
That crest of eagle plume, to crowns ally'd.

Ah! could thy country claim thee for her own!
Could'st thou descend to low, provincial care!—
But claims imperial, calls of high renown,
And more extensive plans thy bosom share!

Our Senate waits, to give thy virtues room,
Thy fires' and country's friends, thy presence greet;
But thy lov'd England points the wreath to come,
And calls thee hence to fill a nobler seat.

Fancy, beholds thee in a nobler seat,
Whence thy wide range of vision might divine,
Where best our long, discordant claims should meet,
Like blended colours, in one radiant line.

* Publius Valerius Publicola.

S P E C I M E N
OF THE
C A P T I V E S,
A
R O M A N C E,

(READY FOR THE PRESS.)

The exordium gives a short view of the invasion of England by the Danes, in the tenth century, and their defeat by ALFRED.

XIII.

AND now the hurricane was over blown,
And to the North retir'd the ruffian blast :
Again the victor climb'd the regal throne,
With Scandinavian spoils superbly grac'd,
And o'er old England's harraff plains, at last,
The dawn of Freedom led the golden day,
While, tir'd of arms, the power of battles cast
His polish'd helm and brigantine away,
And thro' the summer groves, pursu'd the sylvan prey.

XIV.

With clamorous hounds, to chace the flying doe,
 The ROYAL * SAXON, on a summer morn,
 (While yet the welkin wore a crimson glow)
 Awoke the woodland choirs with jocund horn.
 And Sol, at last, by flaming courfers borne,
 Emerging from the pomp of woods afar,
 Began, in umber'd radiance to adorn
 The wide, delightful scene, of sylvan war,
 From Windsor's purple hills, to Dover's chalky bar.

XV.

Following the chace, along the opening vale,
 Which points its bosom to the passing flood,
 They saw a brigantine, with easy sail,
 Which up majestic Thames it's course purfu'd,
 Borne on the swelling tide : the hunters flood,
 And saw the strangers slack the toiling oar,
 Awhile, the wond'ring bands each other view'd,
 At length the hardy sailors fought the shore,
 And in the friendly creek, the wave-worn vessel moor.

XVI.

Forth from the Royal retinue, with speed,
 At Alfred's word, a youthful Baron sprung ;
 And, as the strangers crost the level mead,
 With hasty words addrest the weary throng :

* Alfred.

“ Whence are ye, friends ! that venture thus along
 Those hostile waters, with forbidden prow ;
 No more the sons of violence and wrong,
 Around our shores in sable squadrons go,
 Or dare to ravage here, since Denmark’s overthrow !”

XVII.

He spoke, and thus the senior of the band,
 “ Say, ere we answer, has our search an end ?
 We seek the sovereign of this happy land,
 And at the awful throne adoring bend ?
 When first we saw this noble train descend,
 Thro’ the green forest, to the azure flood,
 In glad presage, we deem’d the royal friend
 Of Liberty, the sylvan chace pursu’d,
 To this delightful shore, along the echoing wood.”

XVIII.

O gallant youth ! confirm this augury,
 And take the thanks of this o’erlabour’d train !
 From *IVERDON, beyond the western sea ;
 We come, the aid of Alfred to obtain,
 To rescue from the foe, our lost domain,
 Who rages in the centre of our isle ;
 Where after many battles fought, in vain,
 He lords it o’er Juverna’s choicest spoil,
 While scarce the slender bands support the strenuous toil.”

* Old name of IRELAND.

XIX.

The wond'ring youth the foreigners survey'd,
 And gently thus return'd : " Ye guefs'd aright !
 Come ! follow me to yonder welcome shade,
 Where yon broad fycamore excludes the light,
 For now the burning sun ascends the height
 Of Heaven, and yonder halts the royal crew."
 In grateful thanks for this auspicious sight,
 They bow to Heaven, and straight their guide pursue,
 Where the attendant train the slaughter'd quarry drew.

XX.

There fate the Saxon Lord, in royal state,
 And saw his train prepare the rich repast ;
 But now, the messenger of EIRIN's fate,
 By the young Baron led, with fervent haste,
 To the green summer hall of Audience prest ;
 And kneeling low, with supplicating strain,
 With pious tears, and ardent prayers, addrest
 The warlike Chief, of England's wide domain ;
 And thus began the guide of Eirin's suppliant train :

XXI.

" Father of Freedom ! Hear the fervent prayer
 Of Iverdon, * that calls aloud for aid !
 While Windsor's woods resound the sylvan war,
 And the brown tenants of the summer shade,
 Lead on the flying chace, from glade to glade.

* Old name of Ireland.

Far other sounds, Ierne's echoes tell,
 There Scandinavia's sons in slaughter wade;
 While from the breezy hill, and winding dell,
 Borne on the fighting gale, the notes of anguish swell."

XXII.

" O leave the flying wolf, and timorous doe,
 And spend your fury on a nobler game!
 The Dane will meet your lance, a daring foe,
 And add new glories to your deathless name.
 Soon as the winds your mighty march proclaim,
 The sacrilegious RAVEN quits her prey,
 And, when you lance abroad the bolted flame
 Mounts on the winged winds, and sails away,
 Like Night's ill omen'd birds, before the shafts of day!"

XXIII.

Irresolute the royal warrior stood,
 While Memory call'd to view, the hated forms
 Of burning towns, and fleets, and fields of blood,
 And nightly ambuscades, and wild alarms.
 His hardy train, tho' terrible in arms,
 Yet shudder'd at the sound of Denmark's name;
 All who remember'd how the Northern swarms,
 On their pale strand, like inundations, came,
 And spread along the shore like wide, consuming flame.

XXIV.

They saw the Saxons doubt, and thus again
 The hoary messenger renew'd his plea :
 " 'Think on the moment, when the cruel Dane,
 Sagacious of your flight, from sea to sea
 Pursu'd your steps, when sacred * ATHELNEY,
 By many a marsh, and sounding flood secur'd,
 The last retreat of parting liberty ;
 Preserv'd the reliques of the conqu'ring sword,
 And in her solemn shades her flying King immur'd."

XXV.

" Who bade the guardian spirit of the night,
 Wake in her lonely moors the lamping blaze,
 That led the Danes, with long, fallacious light,
 Far from the path, in many a winding maze,
 Where never mortal trode the faithless space ;
 While the green sward, that felt unusual weight,
 With horrid chasm, their flying march betrays ;
 And all at once, ingulfs the living freight,
 While IVAR† blam'd their stay, unconscious of their fate."

XXVI.

" HE, whose nocturnal flame, and cloud by day,
 Secur'd thy safety, now thine arm demands !

* The island where Alfred lay concealed during his adversity.

† Ivar, the Danish General.

To shield his holy cause, and hold at bay,
 The baffled rage of Scandinavia's bands.
 That power, whose mandate mov'd the shifting sands,
 And fleets and armies from the port repell'd,
 Requires the help of thy victorious hands !
 Forbid it, Heaven ! the Dane should brave the field,
 While Alfred hunts the doe, in summer woods conceal'd !

XXVII.

" If pure Religion at thy footstool bends,
 And seeks thine aid, to hold the foe at bay ;
 Oh ! think thy life was sav'd for nobler ends,
 Than with the herd of Kings, to spend in play,
 The fleeting hours of Life's uncertain day.
 To England's glory, and to Alfred's fame,
 Enough was given in many a bloody fray ;
 Now, let HUMANITY thy valour claim,
 And our insulted Faith thy pious mind inflame !"

XXVIII.

Fir'd at the bold address, the courtier crew,
 Murmur'd, and look'd intolerable scorn ;
 But the great Regent, to whose mental view,
 The gradual chain of events yet unborn ;
 Rose in clear series, like the dawning morn,
 To the sage Envoy thus his answer gave :
 " Ierne's unexampled woes I mourn ;
 And, could my single arm her millions save,
 The SCANDINAVIAN soon should fill the longing grave !"

XXIX.

“ But well ye know, the GENERAL VOICE must aid
 The feeble movements of my bounded sway ;
 For *here* no King, in barb'rous pomp array'd,
 With arbitrary nod, can raise or lay
 Bellona's storm at will : But sage delay,
 And public wisdom, strikes a surer wound,
 The states assemble with the coming day,
 Where fair AUGUSTA shows her hallow'd mound,
 Then to the wise Divan your embassy propound.”

XXX.

He spoke, with reverence low, the suppliant band
 Depart, and soon the brigandine ascend ;
 The jolly hunters, at their King's command,
 To fair Augusta's walls their journey bend ;
 Behind, in close debate, as friend with friend,
 The King with LANDIN rode, a Neustrian Knight,
 In peaceful arts and arms completely train'd,
 With whom he us'd to share the social rite,
 And on his converse dwelt with ever new delight.

XXXI.

For well he knew, with serious themes, or gay,
 To suit the moment, and the man to please ;
 And ev'ry land he knew, from * Calpes bay,
 To where † Visurgis meets the northern seas :

* Gibraltar.

† The Weser ~~in Germany~~ *in Germany*

And all the glories past of Rome and Greece,
 And ev'ry scene renown'd of modern days,
 Were his ; and well he knew the mind to seize,
 With the resistless charm of artful praise,
 On which the sagest mind with ling'ring love delays.

XXXII.

And well he knew to ward, with ready thought,
 Impending peril, or elude the blow ;
 With stratagems and wiles innumerable fraught,
 To baffle or surprize the raging foe.
 And well he knew to bid the passions glow,
 Or soothe, to sudden calm, the ductile mind ;
 The royal Saxon seem'd his worth to know,
 Often dependant on his arts refin'd,
 When perils, mustering round, against his peace combin'd.

XXXIII.

Him ALFRED lov'd, but cautious still, and just,
 Resolv'd his FAVOURITE'S honour to explore,
 And find, if public love, or sacred lust
 Of sway, his bosom rul'd with sovereign power ;
 Ere he disclos'd to light the hallow'd store,
 Of sapient counsels in his breast conceal'd.—
 —Then musing, as they trac'd the level shore ;
 A crisis fit, the prudent chief beheld,
 And thus, with aspect grave, his seeming views reveal'd.

XXXIV.

“ How blest the Ministers of Life and Light,
 Whose flaming charity can never fail,
 For lack of means !—But we, immerst in night,
 And doom'd to wander this sublunar vale,
 Where, for a day, we fill the lowest scale
 Of intellectual life, lament to see,
 Passion, and Prejudice, and Fear prevail ;
 And sordid Self, with interested plea,
 Against the struggling soul's seraphic energy.”

XXXV.

“ Oh ! were it mine !—the soul-ennobling spell,
 With solitary voice to wake the war ;
 Soon should resounding Fame my trophies tell,
 And purple conquests guide my lofty car !
 Nor should the haughty Lord of Denmark dare
 To waft his levy'd legions o'er the main !—
 —But oh ! the cruel Fates have plac'd a bar
 Before my hopes !—and Law's unfeeling train
 Baffles my ardent prayer, and bids me wish in vain !”

XXXVI.

“ How do I burn to share the bloody fray,
 And meet with mutual shock my ancient foe ;
 But SENATES interpose, with cold delay,
 And dull debates retard the falling blow.

Tho' this hoar head be sprinkled o'er with snow,
 Yet do I love, with sudden powers combin'd
 To bear destruction on my sounding prow,
 And leave the flying march of Fame behind,
 Till * LOCHLIN, in her doom, my dread arrival find !"

XXXVII.

In thought, the fond believing minion spy'd,
 In Alfred's sudden wish, his inmost mind ;
 And, all too credulous his joy to hide,
 The secret byas of the King to find :
 Like a light skiff that veers with every wind,
 Thus sooth'd the purpose of the royal soul :
 " Shall narrow laws the heavenly temper bind ?
 Shall human ties the hero's hand controll,
 Fitted to spread his sway from Indus to the Pole ?"

XXXVIII.

" Oh Alfred ! seize at once the golden hour,
 That bounteous Heaven by Eirin's doom bestows ;
 England shall build thy formidable power,
 A power, so dreadful to her ancient foes !—
 The state must raise a barrier, to oppose
 The fierce invasion of the cruel Dane ;
 And, taught on thy firm valour to repose,
 Shall yield to thee, and thy victorious train,
 The sovereignty, by land, and fasces of the main !"

* Old name of Denmark.

XXXIX.

" Levy thy legions ! and if deep Surmise,
 With jealous eye, thy purpose seem to dread ;
 Point to the tempest in the northern skies,
 Threat'ning afar, and gathering to a head.
 Tell of Ierne's plains, with slaughter red !
 Show how the conflagration rolls along,
 Still with a large supply of fuel fed.
 Till Britain's sons, and Gallia's martial throng,
 Shall scarce repel the tide of Violence and wrong !"

XL.

" Like JULIUS, thus the trembling senate fill,
 With constant rumours of invasions nigh ;
 And dark presages in their hearts instill,
 From all the quarters of the angry sky.
 Let their great edict bid thy banners fly,
 And teach the frightened isle thy need to know ;
 Yet, suffer not thy legions long to lye
 In torpid sloth, but bid their ardour glow
 On Gaul's unguarded coast, or Scandinavia's snow !"

XLI.

" Old England, soon accustom'd to the sight,
 Their glorious arbiter shall learn to boast,
 And view thy armaments, with proud delight,
 The GUARDS OF FREEDOM call'd on every coast ;

Till, by degrees, their apprehension lost,
 In sweet oblivion of insulting war ;
 Thy skilful hand, unthought, and unopposed,
 With master-movement winds the silken snare
 Around their torpid limbs, and crowns reward thy care !”

XLII.

“ Oh ! Alfred ! then thy strong benevolence,
 No more by Senates awed, by forms confin’d,
 Shall fall round the world, like light’nings glance,
 And match the emanations of thy mind !—
 —The Regent of the day, in light enshrin’d,
 Shall stop awhile her burning wheels, to see
 The fasces of his favour’d isle, resign’d
 By the immediate hand of Heav’n, to thee,
 Whilst Love, and filial Fear, applaud thy victory !”

XLIII.

Some moments, lost in thought, the Monarch stood,
 While Indignation, join’d with generous Shame,
 O’er his warm cheek suffus’d the mantling blood,
 And shook with sudden throes his manly frame.
 At length, he cry, “ Oh Wisdom ! Heavenly flame !
 In love detach’d, from the primæval light,
 To guide our feet, and lift the mortal name,
 By just gradations, to an angel’s height ;
 How are thy glories sunk in unsubstantial night ?”

XLIV.

" I ask not power, nor love despotic sway,
 That slippery boon, so much by mortals sought ;
 Nor, ask I Reason's clear unclouded ray,
 Content to share the less invidious lot
 Of virtuous lore, by Heaven, in mercy taught
 To erring man, his fault'ring steps to guide !
 Be Memory ! Fancy ! Intellect forgot !
 All bounteous Heaven ! the dangerous talent hide
 If thus ev'n Reason falls to ruin, misapply'd !"

XLV.

" How oft thy words, like op'ning summer, clear'd
 The clouds, that settled on the deep debate !
 How oft, assisted by thy skill, I steer'd
 Thro' swallowing sands, the vessel of the state !
 Thou subtle, mining spirit ! seen too late !
 O say what spell, in what portentous hour,
 Led thee to brave the storm of public hate ;
 To mar thy vintage in th' unfolding flower,
 To taint my honour first, and then abuse my power ?"

XLVI.

" Unhappy man ! with all thy matchless sense,
 Thou saw'st not how I led thee to thy shame ;
 And now, what subterfuge ? what weak pretence
 Canst thou suggest to veil thy blasted fame ?

Go! in oblivion hide thy hated name;
 Thy name, once glorious! now alas! how lost!
 And know, thy injur'd King would rather claim,
 In Freedom's band, his delegated post,
 Than all the royal pomp of Asia's splendid coast!"

XLVII.

"Go! thou ill-fated man! thy merits past,
 Ward from thy head the well deserved doom!
 But from the hostile plains of Albion, haste!
 Wherever Fortune leads thy steps to roam
 The LAND OF LIBERTY denies a home
 To such as thee!—and may she still deny
 Even the asylum of a quiet tomb,
 To that foul hand that labours to untye
 The hallow'd cords that bind her freeborn family!"

XLVIII.

He spoke, and turn'd away:—WITH guilty shame
 Opprest, the FAVOURITE found his utterance fail;
 Nor dar'd an audience of the King to claim,
 His guilt to clear; but down the winding vale
 His courser turn'd, while shadowy ev'ning pale
 Wav'd o'er the purple hills her banner gray:
 Meantime, the Monarch, in a flowery dale,
 Joining his jolly troop, at close of day,
 To fair Augusta's walls conducts the long array.

XLIX.

Too generous failing of the manly breast?—
 The children yet unborn shall rue the day,
 When Alfred's pitying hand the wretch releas't,
 And sent him, like a pestilence, away,
 Over the unsuspecting world to stray,
 At large, in specious Virtue's fair disguise!
 Thus the fair mirror, with fallacious ray,
 Allures the sweet lark from the liquid skies,
 And brings the warbler down, ah! never more to rise.

L.

LANDIN the courtiers mist, but nought enquir'd,
 For oft the King, on expedition bent,
 When any sudden call the thought inspir'd,
 On errands of deep trust his fav'rites sent:
 And oft the night, her cloudy curtain lent,
 From prying Fame, their stealthy march to hide.
 Thoughtful the Monarch seem'd, and all intent
 On public cares, as thro' the portal wide,
 And down the crowded way he led the living tide.

L.I.

In revelry and sport, the evening clos'd,
 Sweet relaxation of their woodland toil!
 Then leaden Sleep his soothing spell impos'd
 On every sense:—But Alfred, yet awhile,
 Smit with the sufferings of the SAINTED ISLE,

And anxious for the coming day, withstood
 The pleasing charm ; and by the wasting oil
 Of the nocturnal lamp, at large, pursu'd
 His salutary schemes of wide-diffusive good.

LII.

Then, closing all with prayer, the royal sage,
 To the PRIMÆVAL CAUSE his vows address ;
 “ O THOU ! whose power on this sublunar stage,
 Me, all unfit, with regal honours grac'd ;
 And, by my hand, the cruel Dane repress ;
 Accept my thanks, that from a deadlier foe,
 PRIDE, and the LUST of POWER, thy love releas't
 Thy delegate, commission'd here below,
 'To bid thy blessings round in equal measure flow !”

LIII.

“ So may I ever by cælestial sight,
 From coward Doubt, and wild Ambition clear ;
 'Twixt the extremes, direct my course aright,
 And thro' the dreadful shelves securely steer !
 Still may I scorn the SELFISH CALL to hear,
 When Duty pleads, or Glory points the way :
 Or pure Religion, from her radiant sphere
 Descends, with Freedom at her side, to pray
 Her champion's aid, in arms, to chase the fiend away !”

LIV.

The Monarch thus his aspirations breath'd,
 While, kept at distance by the solemn prayer,
 The power of Slumber stood; then softly wreath'd
 Around the regal brow, with gentle care,
 The poppy crown, and many a vision fair,
 Of op'ning glory, sooth'd the godlike breast:
 There first, the fluctuating pomp of war,
 The fairy scene in countless horrors drest,
 Then golden days come on, and images of rest.

LV.

But not compos'd by images of rest,
 The * Gallic fugitive, by Conscience driv'n,
 To EDRIC's stately hall his course address'd,
 Beneath the midnight frown of angry Heaven;
 Already the reproof, by Alfred giv'n,
 Fermented deep, and fir'd his haughty mind,
 Nor long his passions kept the balance even;
 But soon to dark Revenge the scale inclin'd,
 Which soon he thought to fate, with haughty Edric join'd.

LVI.

Edric was born of † INA's royal blood,
 Factious in peace, but nameless in the field.

* Landin.

† Ina, King of Wessex, the common ancestor of Alfred and Edric.

He still, with causeless spite, the King pursu'd
 Whose eagle-winged merit oft compell'd
 The reverence of immortal hate, and held
 Her foes in awe ; but haughty Edric thought
His elder line, by policy expell'd
 From England's throne, and each occasion fought,
 By clamour, force, or fraud, to cross the royal vote.

LVII.

Astonish'd to behold his look of care,
 The malecontent receiv'd his midnight guest,
 Who told how Alfred, with the morning star,
 Meant to convene the Saxon Thanes in haste,
 To treat of Eirin's call, by war oppress'd :
 And in ambiguous phrase he *seem'd* to tell
 Some foul concealment lab'ring in his breast ;
 Some dark design conceiv'd in lowest hell,
 And nourish'd by the King, his subjects rights to quell.

LVIII.

And Friendship seem'd with Honour to contend,
 Whether the secret to conceal, or show ;
 Yet seem'd his keen, expressive look to lend
 A dark, malignant light, that led to know
 The secret meaning of his smother'd woe.
 And flash'd conviction on the kindling mind
 Of INA's heir, who saw a deadly blow,
 Or thought he saw, at Liberty design'd,
 And many an image foul of latent fraud combin'd.

LIX.

Again the Lord of Day illum'd the pole,
 And all the godlike energies of mind ;
 And all the tyrants of the human soul,
 Envy, and Love, and Hope, and Fear, combin'd ;
 And Intellect, and Fancy, unconfin'd,
 Touch'd into being by the heavenly ray,
 Rush'd into life, like the imprison'd wind :
 And first Juvena's sons prevent the day,
 And to the solemn dome pursue their dubious way.

LX.

The valves unfold ; the Senatorial band,
 With din confus'd, the solemn passage throng,
 And range in order due, on either hand,
 Around the throne, with Danish trophies hung.
 But soon, by acclamations loud and long,
 The coming father of the state was told :
 " Father of Freedom ! Hail ! " from every tongue
 Was heard, and myriads crowded to behold
 Their King, as down the lines the long procession roll'd.

LXI.

Arriv'd, he fate, and soon the mournful sound
 Of Supplication in the hall was heard ;
 And soon Juvena's train, with awe profound,
 Before the assembled Potentates appear'd ;
 And told their tale, in deep distress preferr'd ;

Then leave the presence, and their sentence wait
 Abroad, with rising hope alternate cheer'd,
 And fear depress'd, while long in close debate,
 Britannia's mighty Thanes, with godlike Alfred fate.

LXII.

" Fellows in arms," the placid Monarch said,
 " Ye hear Ierne's call, her fervent plea ;
 Her hamlets and her folds in ruin laid,
 And desolation spread from sea to sea.
 There Odin's sons, elate with victory,
 Follow the banners of the ruthless God.
 And shall we bear their horrid blasphemy,
 That the great founder of our faith, o'eraw'd,
 Suffers the savage foe to waste his fair abode ?"

LXIII.

" To us, who saw reveal'd, his thund'ring arm
 And all the pageants of his power display'd
 Strong is the solemn call ! the loud alarm
 That leads us hence, the falling crosses to aid !
 Nor shall the arduous business be delay'd
 By me, nor will I plead my years decline ;
 Soon shall the wish of England be obey'd,
 Whether, in arms, our western friends to join,
 Or to some younger Chief, the glorious post resign."

LXIV.

First REDOWALD, in prudent counsels old,
 Arose, of large and comprehensive mind ;
 But his tame spirit sunk, by caution cool'd,
 And artful schemes, and politics refin'd ;
 On that sad morning, ere the battles join'd
 On Wilton's * Moor, his too sagacious care,
 Dishearten'd England, while the Dane, combin'd
 With bold † Mervinia's legions, rush'd to war,
 And Mercia lost the day, and fled the field afar.

LXV.

“ Is there no charm in peace, or peaceful toils,
 That thus in search of ill we roam the flood,
 And wing our way to the surrounding isles,
 Like vultures, following far the scent of blood ?
 For evermore pursuing or pursu'd ?—

—The gods, my friends ! a floating barrier drew
 Around our shores, and built a bulwark rude,
 Of cliffs embattled high, in dreadful view,
 From England, to repell the bold invasive crew.”

LXVI.

“ This awful theatre, by nature made,
 The circle of our glory seems to bound ;

* Where the English had met with a total defeat by the Danes,
 Anno, 871.

† The Welsh of Merionethshire.

Then let us, ere our Pagan foes invade,
 This little respite seize, in peace profound,
 And glad repose, to heal our ancient wound ;
 Nor dare to tempt the Scandian arms again,
 Nor think the trump of fame will cease to sound
 Britannia's martial deeds, by land and main,
 The triumphs of our King, and Denmark's broken chain."

LXVII.

" O rather let us hear, with ev'ry moon,
 The noise of battle ring around our coast,
 Young ELDRED cry'd " Than soil our trophies won,
 With torpid sloth, and leave our gallant host
 To linger out their lives, to glory lost ;
 And, in the tempest of the nations, sleep !
 Till Denmark, and Norwegia, unopposed,
 With their Milesian allies, cross the deep,
 The long expected meed of many an age to reap !"

LXVIII.

" Should Freedom's call, and warm Compassion fail,
 With Piety combin'd, your souls to bend ;
 Yet, let the voice of policy prevail,
 Your idle legions, o'er the sea to send,
 And, with the sons of Iverdon, defend
 The common bounds, 'gainst the common foe.
 In vain, alas ! with Sitric you contend,
 In vain your navies meet with tilting prow,
 If sad Ierne sinks beneath the menac'd blow.

LXIX.

" In vain, old Ocean guards your threat'ned land,
 With all her chosen terrors frowning round ;
 In vain your native valour dyes the strand
 With Danish blood, returning wound for wound.
 If Eirin's breezy hills, and dale's profound,
 And flowery lawns, with lowing herds replete,
 And mountains blue, with piny chaplets crown'd
 Old Denmark's powers renew, and freight her fleet,
 While her embosom'd bays afford a safe retreat ! "

LXX.

" I see, from all her ports, the sable swarm
 Insult our frontiers, and our fleet repell.
 I see her hundred mouths emit the storm,
 Like Hecla's Hill, or flaming * Mongibel,
 Then re-admit them, like the gorge of hell,
 When English valour threatens the baleful brood !
 Till rallying from the long-retreating dell,
 Or gloomy grove, with spirit unsubdu'd,
 Their legions launch again, and hide the western flood."

LXXI.

" To arms, to arms," the gallant Esmond cry'd,
 " And tear from Dania that distinguish'd prize,

* Etna.

Ere in our trembling ports their navies ride,
 Or on our walls her sable standard flies.
 To us, old Iverdon, for aid applies,
Her homage, our protection best will pay ;
 Let * Hermon's son, by old experience wise,
 To England's care, resign the rescu'd prey,
 England, accustom'd long to hold the Dane at bay."

LXXII.

" And, who the bloody purchase ought to share,
 With honourable toil, by England bought ?
 Who guards the common bulwark of the war,
 But she, that saves Milesius' ancient lot,
 FREE TO HER SONS ?"—The whole assembly caught,
 With kindling rapture, thunder'd loud applause,
 Till Ardulph rose, and audience calm besought ;
 Ardulph, the friend of man, and Freedom's cause,
 Whose steady wisdom still maintain'd her sacred laws.

LXXIII.

" Ignoble thought ! unworthy Albion's race !—
 For the poor title to an harraist shore,
 To *sell* our proud alliance, and deface
 That blazonry of fame, our fathers wore !
 If warlike HENGIST, thus, in days of yore,
 His mercenary aid, to England sold,
 No heavenly precept tam'd her lust of power,

* Reigning King of Ireland.

No equitable thought his arm controll'd,
No * law of sympathy, his proud ambition cool'd !"

LXXIV.

" Shall she, like ruffians, on the desert strand,
When angry Neptune scales the bending skies,
Forbid the toiling mariner to land,
Heedless of prayers, and agonizing cries,
Unless he gives away the golden prize,
The last, sad relique of his naval hoard?—
O let us yet revere the sacred ties,
That fasten man to man, with firm accord,
Nor cause of obloquy to Alfred's name afford."

LXXV.

He spoke, in murmurs low, the list'ning crowd,
Their dubious praise, and mingled censure spoke;
But † Edric next, his gloomy aspect show'd,
A soul of fullen fire, that scorn'd the yoke
Of regal sway, nor 'vail'd his lofty look,
To Kesar, or to King, whoever frown'd :
From LANDIN, late, a dark furnise he took,
Of some foul pest, from Eirin's vales profound,
That aim'd the lofty stem of Liberty to wound.

* Christian Law, so called from the famous gospel precept—*Do unto others as you would they should do unto you.*

† See ft. 54. &c.

LXXVI.

He rose, and in his look defiance flamed,
 And jealousy, matur'd to lasting hate ;
 And thus, aloud, the malecontent exclaim'd :
 " Ye gallant Thanès ! that love Britannia's state,
 I see the closure of this deep debate,
 Pregnant with ills ! I see the fabric fair,
 Of Liberty, beneath the whelming weight
 Of foreign trophies lost, and needless war,
 While ages toil in vain, her ruins to repair !"

LXXVII.

" Pardon ! * thou generous friend to England's weal,
 Whose strenuous arm, with more than mortal might,
 Was seen to check the adamantine wheel,
 Turn'd by the daughters of eternal night,
 That spun our purple doom ! our lowly plight
 To laurel'd triumphs, and convivial joys
 Thy prowess turn'd ! But now a sudden blight,
 Sent from the awful Regent of the skies,
 Sickens our summer blooms, and all the year destroys."

LXXVIII.

" As some pale warrior, when the fever's fire,
 With scenes of battle fills the madding brain,

* Alfred.

Longs to put on Bellona's fresh attire,
 To reap the harvest of the bloody plain,
 And try the tumult of the field again :
 Dreaming his strength return'd, while fell disease
 New threds his nerves, and boils in every vain ;
 Thus, the fair visions of fallacious peace,
 Tempts us our arms to try beyond the western seas !"

LXXIX.

" Can we forget the foe, whose labour tills
 The Mercian vallies, and the * Sunward Mound,
 Who colonize along the fable hills
 Of Cumberland, and Cheviot's utmost bound,
 And Deira's plains to Neptune's stormy sound ?—
 Half these are Danes, and like the brooding storm,
 Wait but the heavenly sign, to spread around
 Tumult, and disarray, and loud alarm,
 Tho' now they seem withheld by Alfred's dreaded arm."

LXXX.

" I see the living rancour of their eye,
 (Tho' now beneath the yoke they seem to bend)
 Like the red promise of the evening sky,
 The tempest of the coming day portend.—
 Go now—to Eírin's woods your victims send,
 Where ruin lurks in deadly ambush near.
 Soon yonder clouds, that on your hills impend,

* East Anglia,

And yet their desolating march forbear,
Shall deluge all the plain, and mar the mellow year."

LXXXI.

" Ev'n tho' the terrour of the sanguine scourge,
Should hold in awe the oft-defeated foe;
While England's heroes o'er the fable surge,
To green Ierne point the lofty prow;
Yet CONQUEST calls alike, and OVERTHROW,
For numerous legions still, and new supplies;
Low droops proud Victory, with faded brow,
And moulted plume, beneath yon weeping skies,
If our too cautious hands the levied aid denies."

LXXXII.

" But, verft in plunder, and the waste of war,
The VETERAN soon will scorn our peaceful toil;
And, should some young, ambitious Prince, prepare
To forge new fetters for his native isle,
The warlike band, enured to annual spoil,
To ruin'd provinces, and scenes of blood;
And us'd to purchase the *imperial* smile
By moonlight wars, beyond the western flood,
Round the tyrannic flag, with chearful haste will crowd."

LXXXIII.

" Then sad Ierne to his standard won,
Shall fling her legions in the Royal scale,

And English freedom, like the waning morn,
 Shall waste away, or o'er the bosom pale
 Of Ocean, fleet before the rising gale,
 To other worlds, beyond the Western Main ;
 Or, like an hermit, in Mervinia's vale,
 Live with the mountain hind and toiling swain,
 Their hamlets to protect against the ruffian train."

LXXXIV.

" Our laurel'd Chief, beneath the setting star,
 Shall teach the conquer'd clans the trade of blood,
 And from Ierne lead the moving war,
 To pale Britannia, o'er the toiling flood,
 A savage foe ! while England, overaw'd,
 Falls to her parricides an easy prize,
 Our choicest blood and treasures sent abroad,
 To yonder climes that front the western skies,
 In vengeance shall return, with ever new supplies."

LXXXV.

" Thus shall our vital moisture drain away,
 By parching suns, in deadly blights return,
 Or, in contagious vapours blot the day,
 While our pale shores the dark Invasion mourn.—
 Rather let Eirin fall !—let Tamor burn !—
 Or bid their King resume his glory lost,
 And snatch the wreath away, by Dania worn

Or send them hence, to Gallia's friendly coast,
Against the common foe, to rouse the Celtic host."

LXXXVI.

"Perish the thought!" young Adelmarr reply'd,
"That Gaul should claim the honourable meed,
The doom of conquered Eirin to decide,
And with presumptuous hand their canvals spread,
On our insulted seas! Let Dania bleed!
Bleed England! Eirin! ere an alien power,
From her blue promontories lift his head,
And looks, with lordly frown, the ocean o'er,
On the proud armaments that line our native shore!"

LXXXVII.

Alfred arose, his generous heart was pain'd
To find the fland'rous tongue attain his fame;
He, whose intrepid hand, so long sustain'd
The drooping glories of Britannia's name.
"My friends," he cry'd, "No more assert the claim
Of England's glory, or religion's aid,
Since cold Suspicion damps the warriors flame,
And candid Virtue, pines in Envy's shade,
Let Denmark, at her will, our trembling shores invade!"

LXXXVIII.

"Say, is your love of freedom more than mine—
Ungrateful men!—but let my deeds defend

My wounded fame, for ne'er shall wreath entwine
 Those brows again, nor shall the Monarch blend
 His peaceful hours, with broils that never end,
 For transient glory, which the baleful breath
 Of pois'nous envy, to the dust can send,
 Or low-born jealousy, whose causeless wrath,
 Can touch with ranc'rous gall, the most unblemisht faith."

LXXXIX.

" Let the Milesians tell their harraist lord,
 That England's warlike thanes, with caution wise,
 No longer trust their saviour with the sword,
 Deaf to the prayers, the supplicating cries,
 Of Iverdon ! regardless of the ties
 Of pure religion, and a common blood !
 For me, I here implore the awful skies,
 If Alfred e'er forgot the public good,
 Be his detested name with obloquy pursu'd !"

XC.

" I too have friends ! and soon could turn the tide
 Of clamorous faction, to demand the war,
 Or with my solitary voice, decide
 The long debate, and for the field declare !
 But my consummate glory well can spare
 The test, and much I scorn the little art,
 To win my people's vote, by means unfair !

Be mine the empire o'er the willing heart !
 I love unbounded sway, and scorn to rule a part !"

XCI.

" But ye ! bold hearts in vain ! whose gen'rous voice
 Is all for war, who scorn to wait the foe !
 In torpid sloth, beneath your native skies ;
 But pass the barrier, and prevent the blow !
 If still your hearts with native ardour glow,
 In voluntary bands, to cross the main,
 Go ! in the name of martial glory ! go !
 With ardour new, inspire the harraff train,
 And with collected strength, repel the raging Dane !"

XCII.

He ceas'd, and fate ; a deep, portentous cloud,
 The sullen brow of Faction overhung ;
 But now the hour dismiss'd the martial crowd,
 And thro' the op'ning valves, the noble throng,
 In deep, unsocial silence, pac'd along.
 The sad Milesians stood in dumb despair,
 With grief, and generous indignation stung,
 To find their hopes of new-enkindled war,
 And all their prospects gone, like images of air.—

A band of Saxon Volunteers, under the command of Albert, a Northumbrian, embark for Ireland, to assert the natives against the Danes: They find peace restored, but are detained in Ulster by contrary winds,

Now Calga's walls they gain'd where Nigel's care,
With genial gifts, delay'd the gallant train; *
Their navy now, from Curan's eastern bar
Came round, and now the Saxon Lord again
Resolv'd to man his fleet, and tempt the main,
Since unexpected peace had sheath'd his blade.
With hospitable care, the noble Thane, †
From day to day, the gallant youth delay'd,
Till Albert's haste, at length, his fervent prayers outweigh'd.

* Viz. Albert and the Northumbrian Volunteers.

† Nigel, Regent of Ulster.

But now, as Heaven ordain'd, the wat'ry star,
 Which rules the flood, and bids the tempest rise,
 Gave the red signal to the windy war,
 And the deep ferment stain'd the angry skies.
 The fresh gale sunk, and soon the awful voice
 Of the Norwegian wind forbid the sail;
 Full thirty days it storm'd: The new allies:
 In Nigel's hall, attend the vocal shell,
 That now no more was heard of bloody wars to tell.

O vagrant muse! the wond'rous cause unfold,
 Which held Juverna's haughty foe at bay;
 And the proud wheels of victory controll'd,
 When hapless Iverdon at mercy lay,
 And seem'd to wait her doom? Upon a day,
 As * Sitric led along his weary host,
 And thro' Ophalia's woods explor'd his way,
 Between two hills, with bow'ry shades emboss'd,
 His long laborious march a strange adventure cross'd.

Amid the music of the martial fife,
 They heard a pausing strain salute the ear,
 Along the vale. But soon, in tuneful strife,
 And concert full, arose the anthem clear,
 Harmonious psalmody, distinct and near!
 And soon emerging full, the cause was seen,
 An holy brotherhood, contemning fear,

* The King of Denmark.

Led by their Lord, a man of awful mien,
Forsook the gloomy shade, and crost the level green.

But soon, as by an holy impulse driven,
They wheel'd around, the pagan's march to meet ;
Like men, who seem'd to wait the will of Heaven,
Wav'ring, the Scandians stood, nor dar'd to threat
The holy train, who soon, with hasty feet
Arrived, and stood in silence, van to van,
While every heart a falt'ring measure beat ;
At length, the leader of the holy clan,
Breaking the solemn pause, in accents slow began.

" Paynim ! behold th' inviolable Fair, *
The baffled fury of her foes disdains,
From her high battlements, with scornful air,
She waves her hand aloft, and mocks thy pains ;
Not *her* thou tyrant, thy bold voice profanes,
But *him* who made thee ; *him*, whose sov'reign will,
With matchless patience, still, thine arm sustains,
Thy motions governs, and inspires thy skill,
Tho', oft and oft, forewarn'd, a flagrant rebel still."

" Like thee, the minions of thy power blaspheme,
And all thy frantic motions idolize ;
Thus, after thee, they chant the baleful theme.

* The Christian Church.

" Ye venerable groves ; that proudly rise
 " Favorites of Heav'n ! usurpers of the skies ;
 " And you, ye pines ! that fan the wint'ry air,
 " Whose giant height, the stormy north defies,
 " Sublimely waving to the windy war !
 " Alas ! the edge comes down, which never knew to spare !

" Where'er my legions sweep the sandy plain,
 " Perennial fountains scarce the draught supply,
 " The floods forget their journey to the main,
 " And sudden leave their gaping channels dry ;
 " But hark ! blasphemer ; to thy lords reply !
 " Son of perdition ! know thy abject birth,
 " Rais'd, like a meteor, to the wondering sky,
 " Or, like the whirlwinds of thy native north,
 " The rampires of my foes, to level with the earth.

" For this, my light'nings wither'd all their force,
 " For this, their nerveless hands resign'd the spear,
 " As when red Sirius leads the fultry hours,
 " And fires to tenfold rage the fervid year !
 " They pin'd away, beneath the blast severe,
 " Like gray grass, waving o'er the ruin'd wall,
 " But now my bridle checks thy mad career ;
 " Stand ! harken ! and obey thy sovereign's call,
 " Or the horizon round shall tremble at thy fall."

" Slacken thy march, and dread my injur'd name,
 " Thou scourge of angry Heaven! thy talk is o'er!
 " Juverna's Lord, by long affliction tame,
 " Acknowledges the rod, and sins no more.
 " Thou wast not call'd to lay the realm in gore,
 " To sack his towns, and desolate the plain,
 " But, by the timely penance to restore
 " The chastis'd rebel to his God again,
 " And from the spreading taint, to vindicate his reign.

" That power, whose nod arrests the rolling wave,
 " Who rules the whirlwind, and directs the storm;
 " Whose sovereign word the dread permission gave,
 " Which rous'd to blood thy far destroying arm,
 " Now sends his messenger, with mightier charm,
 " To take the temper from thy thirsty spear,
 " To bid thee sheath the sword, with slaughter warm,
 " And from thy brow thy bloody laurel tear;
 " Obey the present God, and stop thy mad career!"

" Dreamer! avaunt!" the haughty Monarch cries,
 " Nor tempt the sword that spares thy trembling age."
 " O thou, whose volleying thunder shakes the skies,"
 The sage exclaims, " behold the Scandian's rage,
 " And bid the heav'nly truth his heart engage:
 " Struck by that hand, which caus'd the rock to flow,
 " Let thy descending peace his fury suage,

" And teach the haughty rebel to forego
 " The blood-stain'd diadem, that binds his haughty brow."

" Look up! fond man, and see the heav'nly sign,
 That shews how soon thy glories fleet away!"
 Just then, so well the brotherhood divine
 Had tim'd their message; o'er the orb of day,
 A dim eclipse began its gradual way,
 And ominous ev'ning, o'er the prospect clos'd,
 In slow solemnity, while deep dismay,
 In horror, stole along the Danish host,
 As Day's bright chariot hung in total darkness lost.

The plummy choirs their sprightly carols ceast,
 And to th' asylum of the grove withdrew;
 And the wild woodland tenants went to rest,
 While the bright marshal of the starry crew,
 Undazzled by the day, look'd out to view,
 The dread defection of the solar light;
 And now, the sacred bands began anew,
 Their solemn descant, like the bird of night,
 That cheers the lonely hours, remov'd from mortal sight.

No murmurs thro' the shadowy host was heard,
 In holy horror to the raptur'd strain;
 Lift'ning: At last a dubious glimpse appear'd,
 Of *Sol*, emerging from the dark domain

Of Cynthia's orb, but then, the gladsome train,
Chorus'd the light in Hallelujahs high :

" Thus, thus, shall Faith and Freedom gild again,
The wide horizon round with light and joy,
When Dania's storms overblown, shall leave the light'n'd sky."

'Twas then, the Pagan van began to melt,
And down their polish'd arms, repentant, flung;
Soon either wing the soft infection felt,
Which run, like lambent flame, the ranks along;
Till all in tears dissolv'd, the martial throng,
As if they meant to wash their stains away,
Around the holy man imploring throng,
And for th' initial rite began to pray,
To purge the taint of sin, which yet infecting lay.

And first, the monarch doff'd his shining mail,
And first, the limpid stream obedient fought,
Which stole in murmurs down the shady vale,
Perennial spring! with cooling treasures fraught,
Then all assembling round the sacred spot;
The band, alternate, share the cleaning rite,
Successive, by the holy brethren taught,
Those truths, that broke the gloom of ancient night
And cheer'd the darken'd soul with intellectual light.

Now Fame, that us'd of bloody broils to tell,
The welcome news, to Eirin's Monarch bore,

What wond'rous chance, the royal Dane befell,
 Met by his Saviour in the desert hoar.
 And he, profuse so late of human gore,
 Seem'd to renounce the desolating trade,
 A Christian now ! a man of blood no more !
 Compell'd to sheath, his far-destroying blade,
 By HIM, whose sovereign word the rising tempest laid.

Soon more than Rumour told the wond'rous tale,
 For now, to Eirin's King, an Envoy came,
 From the new convert in the sacred vale,
 Whose message stamp'd the vague report of Fame ;
 Peace he propos'd, in royal Sitric's name,
 And amicable league to Eirin's Lord,
 With a fair pledge of peace, the northern Dane ;
 Sweet Eleanor, by rival Kings ador'd,
 But for himself reserv'd the conquests of the sword. *

* Then follows an account of the division and allotment of a portion of the conquered country to the Dane, and the preparations for the royal nuptials. Suspicion of treachery, on the side of the Dane, entertained by Negil, and his dispute in the Milesian Senate, with Colmar, on the subject. The commencement of the story of THEODOLFE and Emma concludes the Specimen.

Not all the darts of love are tip'd with lead ;
 Not all to low pursuits the bosom fire ;
 But oft with generous thoughts, the mind they feed,
 And fervent thirst of genuine fame inspire,

Far from the Syren glance, ye youths retire,
Which leads to shame; but when the heav'nly boy,
Fanns, with his purple wings, the proud desire
Of honest fame, the bold adventure try,
And labour to obtain the plaudit of the sky!

The one is common to the savage kind,
The lion's fury, and the panther's flame,
The other dignified by love of *mind*,
A nobler origin is known to claim,
When min'd, by lapse of time, the mundane frame,
And all its perishable scenes decay,
Thou still shalt live, immortal, and the same
In the high noon of everlasting day,
And all the blest above confess thy potent sway.

A youth there was, of Gothmund's warlike train,
Who, not by lucre led, nor thirst of blood,
But love of glory, past the northern main,
And foremost still in front of danger stood,
The first to scale the wall, to pass the flood,
To dare the ambush, or the camp explore;
But when the royal Dane, by Heav'n subdu'd,
Had seem'd to give the trade of slaughter o'er,
His hours he pass'd in peace, on Senu's gentle shore.

It chanc'd, as wand'ring at the close of light,
Along the mazes of a solemn grove,

When settling o'er the shade, approaching night,
 Her gentle glooms with easy finger wove,
 O'er ev'ry ally green, and gay alcove ;
 He heard, afar, a lamentable strain,
 Of some benighted traveller, who strove
 To scape the hand of violence, in vain,
 And now with piercing cries the forest rang again.

He hurried on, instructed by his ear,
 And soon the soul-affecting cause beheld,
 A young Milesian virgin, lovely, fair,
 With her attendant maids, by ruffians held,
 Of Scandian race, who prowld the nightly field,
 Like famish'd wolves, to seize their feeble prey,
 But soon the sword of Theodolfe, compell'd
 The lawless sons of spoil to haste away,
 Like the nocturnal crew, which shun the eye of day.

She thank'd the gallant youth, with grateful tears,
 And at his warm request her lineage told ;
 Her ancestors, in Eirins golden years,
 Ansoa's sons with gentle sway controll'd,
 Now in a neighb'ring vale, her parent old,
 The reliques of his ancient state possess'd,
 Since cruel Dania chang'd the times of gold,
 And claim'd the flow'ry borders of the west,
 To hapless Iverdon, a dire, unwelcome guest.

The gallant Theodolfe the virgin led,
 To the near mansion of her aged fire;
 The fire, with hospitable rites, delay'd
 The saviour of his child, while young Desire
 Fann'd in the warrior's heart the latent fire.
 The father saw, and hail'd the growing flame;
 Fair EMMA felt her gratitude inspire
 A correspondent glow, but maiden shame,
 And inborn dignity the infant wish o'ercame.

But soon the fire, in pity to the pair,
 And won to yield, by Theodolfe's request,
 Prevents the wishes of the conscious fair,
 And tells the passion of his noble guest,
 The lover oft before his suit had prest;
 But still, with soft denial, to her fire
 The maid referr'd; but when the youth confess'd
 To the benignant man his warm desire,
 He soon his sanction gave, and blest the sacred fire.

Their faith *seem'd* one, the pure baptismal rite,
 The noble convert with his King had shar'd;
 The maid consents, and soon his sacred light,
 With chearful haste, the nuptial god prepar'd.
 —Oh! let the holy rite be yet deferr'd,
 Unhappy fire! till * Tamor's Feast be o'er,

* The approaching festival appointed for the nuptials of the King of Ireland and Elianor.

While Sitric veils his fraud, with double guard :
 But soon, the genial board shall float in gore,
 And strife the signal sound to Eirin's furthest shore.

* * * * *

—Why hangs the husband o'er yon fatal scroll,
 While streaming tears his infant joys profane ?
 Why does he gaze in agony of soul,
 On the fair links of yonder golden chain,
 Giv'n by his lovely bride, but giv'n in vain ?
 Alas ! a stronger link of holy dread
 Fetters his mind.—But oh ! illustrious Dane,
 Yet ere the moment of escape be fled,
 Preserve thy lovely spouse, and sire's devoted head !

But now, with wild alarm, his lovely spouse
 Perceives the tempest of the hero's breast ;
 How fast the tide of passion ebbs and flows,
 How oft by dark despondence lull'd to rest.
 With suppliant tears, the lovely mourner preft
 The secret of his swelling grief to know,
 And thus, at length, the conquer'd youth address
 His spouse, tho' oft the storm of bursting woe,
 And sorrow's bitter show'r forbid the cause to show.

“ Lost ! lost, alas ! beyond my power to save,
 I now must leave whate'er I hold most dear,

Leave her, perhaps, to fill the gloomy grave,
 And I, unhappy I, am doom'd to bear
 A share in Eirin's woes !” alarm'd to hear
 His words, and his impassion'd looks to see ;
 Again she pray'd her noble spouse to clear
 The secret of the deadly embassy,
 By every soothing art, and every tender plea.

“ Alas,” he cry'd, “ the final blow is given,
 Which seals the doom of this devoted land ;
 The signal of her fall is seen in heaven,
 And Odin triumphs o'er the bloody strand,
 The horrid business, long by Sitric plann'd,
 Is ripe at last, and labours to a close—
 Ev'n now, perhaps, he gives the stern command,
 From Tamor's hall to let destruction loose,
 Careless of obloquy and violated vows !”

“ Oh could my single hand avert our doom !—
 But cruel Honour, link'd with Fate, denies ;
 How sweet, with you, in distant climes to roam,
 And spend our days beneath more gentle skies ;
 But oh ! the martial oath, the hallow'd ties
 That binds with more than adamant force
 The warriors soul !—Oh Heav'ns ! the flames arise,
 Yonder the sign of blood ascending soars,
 Haste ! haste ! your instant flight ! and quit those deadly shores !”

'Twas night, the father, and the weeping fair,
 With a few trusty slaves, the hero led,
 Down to the shore, but watchful Hinguar, there,
 All round his cruel sentinels had spread,
 And soon they met the deadly ambuscade :
 Short was their strife, and threats and pray'rs, in vain,
 The youth employ'd : in vain, he oft display'd
 His faithful service to the royal Dane,
 The captive pair were led to join the sentenc'd train.*

Gothmund arriv'd ; in vain the youth implor'd ;
 The reverend father, and the fair, to free,
 Immortal hate inspir'd the haughty Lord,
 For Theodölfe's unshaken amity
 To Eugene well he knew, and spurn'd his plea.
 The hapless husband, struck with pale despair,
 Stood for a while, in speechless agony,
 Then fought (a slender boon) to see the fair,
 For her tremendous doom, his Emma to prepare.

Gothmund agreed, but hell inspir'd the thought,
 To rend the bleeding heart with anguish new,
 Then to the gloomy jail, the youth was brought,
 Where Emma fate, retir'd from mortal view.
 The awful scene to come, had chang'd her hue,
 To faintly pale, yet still peculiar grace
 Liv'd in her look, and deeper homage drew,

* Viz. The Christians who had been seized at a concerted time all
 over Ireland, by the Danes.

Than when the rose of health adorn'd her face,
For somewhat seem'd her mind, above its lot to raise.

Her hands were clasp'd, but not in guilty grief,
Not, like a Magdalene, she rais'd her eye
With penitential tears, to beg relief—
Nor heav'd her bosom with one fearful sigh,
But, like a winged virtue, sent from high,
To this bad world, to walk the fated round,
She seem'd to meditate the op'ning sky,
As one on heaven's eternal voyage bound,
By fiery instinct rais'd to spurn the fordid ground.

But when he came, the angel left her look,
And all the woman rush'd upon her soul;
Her Heav'n-aspiring mind, awhile forsook
Her fiery-winged friends above the pole,
And mingled grief, and love connubial stole
In tears away "and do the fates allow
This boon," she cry'd "before I reach the goal,
To see the partner of my bliss below,
Ere yet my parting soul the cares of life forego."

He clasp'd the weeping fair, and "yet," he cry'd,
"A moment is allow'd, a slender space,
Yet, ere it fleet, thy lover's fate decide,
If mutual love, or length of happy days,
Or my eternal peace with Emma weighs;

Renounce the cross ! and quit the sentenc'd train,
While Sitric, yet, the fatal word delays ;
Proud Gothmund then may storm, but storm in vain,
To see his rescued prey condemn the broken chain.

“ Think what a triumph to the Dane is giv'n,
What savage joy, to see his ancient hate
Against thy husband, seal'd by angry Heaven,
And his deep malice fed by Emma's fate.
Oh Emma ! think, before 'tis yet too late ;
Renounce the cross ; and disappoint his wrath,
Revere thy fire ! revere thy mourning mate,
Nor leave thy constant Theodolfe, beneath,
To drag a hated life, nor dare to 'venge thy death.”

He ceast, for sparkling indignation warm,
Lived in her look, and light'ned in her eye,
A heav'nly glow enhancing every charm ;
“ And is it thus you break the dearer tie,
That bound us with the sanction of the sky :
O bitterness of death ! exalted pain !
I thought, when fortune dash'd my cup of joy,
This single consolation might remain,
To find us link'd above, in pure Emmanuel's reign.

“ Immortal guardians, thro' the dreadful test
Sustain my virtue, and my faith uphold ;
For what is virtue, when the tranquil breast
Nor trial knows, to purge the genuine gold

From earthly dross. — O negligent and cold,
 To pure enjoyment, and the charms of mind;
 I thought thy manly spirit, uncontroll'd,
 Had left the accidents of life behind,
 And each sublunar chance, to mortal man assign'd !”

“ And what is life, my Theodolfe,” she cry’d,
 “ Without the heart-felt joy, the heavenly glow,
 Of self-acquittance, rais’d by virtuous pride,
 O’er every transitory chance below ?
 Shall I survive, the final overthrow
 Of conscience, reason, and eternal truth,
 To feel the viewless sting of endless woe,
 Above the pow’r of ought on earth to soothe ;
 Ah ! lure me not to shame ! mistaken, generous youth, &c.”

END OF THE SPECIMEN.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

EARL OF CHARLEMONT, &c.*

O THOU! in letter'd ease retir'd,
Whose noon of life, the patriots fir'd;
When Eirin's free-born sons thy call obey'd:
What sister of the sacred nine,
(For all the virgin choir is thine,)
Hallows thy musings in Marino's shade?

I see thee fit, with tranquil eye,
The fair plantation's † growth to spy;
Foster'd by thee, on Eirin's favour'd strand,
The nurslings of thine Attic Bower,
By vernal sun and genial shower,
Rais'd to an hopeful height, their boughs expand.

* These verses were by accident misplaced, which I hope will be accepted as an apology, by the noble personage to whom they are addressed, for their appearance in this part of the volume.

* The Royal Irish Academy.

Or, dost thou turn the Grecian page,
 To mark, how Democratic Rage,
 On other shores its fiery track pursu'd ;
 Till, cautious, from its wild career,
 Assembled nations, struck with fear,
 Remov'd its fuel, and the pest subdued.

Not such thy mild and temper'd ray,
 That chac'd the settled gloom away,
 When Freedom op'd her eyes on new-born light ;
 When by the kindling dawn reveal'd,
 His peaceful bands emblaz'd the field,
 Publish'd the high resolve, and claim'd their right.

Full many a meteor's wand'ring light,
 Has burn'd along the waste of night,
 By vapours kindled, and in vapours lost ;
 Flashing in ceruscations wild,
 Since first your beam, with influence mild,
 Rose like a star benign, and blest'd our coast.

Long exil'd from his native shore,
 You brought the * sleeping pilgrim o'er,
 And watch'd his slumbers with parental care.
 Your art the magic medium clear'd,
 Thro' which his native land appear'd
 A somb'rous scene, a prospect of despair !

* Freedom.

You taught him soon to recognize,
 Her native hills, that kiss'd the skies,
 Bosom'd with winding vales, with woods emboss'd
 Minerva thus, with heavenly sleight,
 * Clear'd from thick fogs, the cheated sight
 Of sage Ulysses, on his native coast.

For years, in Wisdom's shrine conceal'd,
 Your pious care the stranger held,
 (So Judah's † patriot hid the royal boy,)
 Till, to the plausive bands around,
 You call'd him from his shrine profound,
 Like a descending native of the sky.

Thy daring friend ‡ the flag unfurl'd,
 High streaming o'er a wond'ring world ;
 He spoke ; and millions caught the sacred flame ;
 Thus Aaron, by his brother call'd
 To Israel's legions long enthral'd,
 With heaven-taught eloquence divulg'd their claim:

O may'st thou keep the public mind
 Like thine, to legal claims confin'd,
 Like that prime orb, § that rules the murm'ring tide,
 And checks the sister planets fway,
 Which else would give the deluge way,
 O'er the pale shores indevastation wide !

* Odyssey, B, 13.

2 Kings, c. 11.

§ Alluding to the
 solar influence on the tides.

† See the Athaliah of Racine, and

‡ Mr. Grattan.

§ Alluding to the

And may the band * that boasts thy name,
 Press onward in the paths of fame,
 And still new worlds of science own their power.
 Long o'er their views may'st thou preside,
 Their plans with sapient counsel guide,
 And share the well-earn'd wreath's immortal dower !

Friend to the muses humblest plea,
 Thy genial smile distinguish'd me,
 When my rude hand the Tuscan lyre † essay'd.
 May every social joy combine,
 (For every social charm is thine,)
 To cheer thy leisure in Marino's shade !

* The Royal Irish Academy.

† Translation of Dante.

N.B. An earlier place in the Volume, was designed for the foregoing lines ; but, owing to an accident, it happened to be misplaced.

RESPECT for distinguished genius, and other motives, both of a public and *personal* nature, had long made the author wish for an opportunity of marking his veneration for the illustrious personage whose name he has taken the liberty of prefixing to the following lines. The most favourable juncture which occurred, for this purpose, was His Lordship's return from England (1793) and then, unfortunately, the letter press of the foregoing collection, was just closed. This circumstance, it is humbly hoped, will be admitted by his Lordship, as a partial apology for the lateness of the insertion, and also, in some degree for the numerous defects, and hasty execution of the following address.

3d October, 1793.

TO THE
RIGHT REVEREND
THOMAS PERCY,
LORD BISHOP OF DROMORE,
ON HIS RETURN TO IRELAND, ANNO. 1793.

WELCOME! thrice welcome to those shores, again
Escap'd the perils of th' autumnal main!

* * * * *

O'er many a mournful trophy, won and lost,
Four times the burning line HYPERION crost,*
And, wheeling round from either tropic, view'd
Waste realms, and flaming towns, and fields of blood.
While to his eye, our planet's face afar
Display the sanguine, stern, eclipse of war,
Whence Blasphemy, with deep, volcanic rage,
Seem'd war with heaven, and man, at once to wage;
Since Taste and Genius wept the western gale
That wing'd, for other shores, thy parting sail.

* His Lordship had been two years absent from Ireland.

Not long they mourn'd ; for, tho' you seem'd to part,
 Your country's purest love, that warm'd your heart,
 Still led you, * like Verona's sage, to find
 What fatal cause had fir'd the general mind,
 What chance had given the flaming chaos way,
 Whose loud, eruptive storm obscur'd the day.
 Undaunted round the verge you seem'd to go,
 And mark the fiery flood that rav'd below,
 Then, with deep thought, explor'd the mighty charm
 Of sovereign power to lay the coming storm.—
 From the calm regions of eternal rest,
 Ev'n from the splendid mansions of the blest,
 You call'd the mighty spirit to your aid, †
 Who here, in mortal form, the Crozier sway'd.
 On thee the mit'red faint, benignant, smiles,
 And aids, with viewless hand, thy noble toils.

O may'st thou, like the warm approach of spring,
 That Promethæan charm, to Eirin bring,
 Which dull, cold hearts will own, with filial awe,
 And learn to beat for Loyalty and Law !—

* Pliny the elder.

† His Lordship is engaged in a republication of the works of the celebrated Dr. JEREMY TAYLOR, some time Lord Bishop of Down and CONNOR ; a design eminently adapted to promote the true evangelical spirit of pure philanthropy, Christian moderation, and subjection to legal authority.

By thee recall'd, our buried bards arise,*
 Visions of ancient glory meet our eyes ;
 The lyre resounds, to former ages dear,
 And long-forgotten warblings charm the ear.
 Amid the laurel'd pomp we see thee stand,
 The trembling chords obey thy skilful hand ;
 The Phrygian harp renews its sweetest strain,
 And Bertram's sorrows wound the list'ning train. †

* * * * *

In ancient times the muses worth was priz'd,
 Her aid the social virtues recognized ;
 Nor are her charms decay'd, while PERCY's name
 Supports her state, and dignifies her claim.
 The muse will earn her wreath, for she can quell
 The demagogue, and mar the sophist's spell :
 The descant bold of Thracia's lyre alone,
 Baffled the Syrens with commanding tone ;
 When their smooth measures lull'd the slumb'ring main,
 And warriors melted at the magic strain. ‡

* Reliques of Ancient Poetry, published by his Lordship.

† Hermit of Warkworth.

* Οἱ δ' ἄπο νηος

Ἡδὴ πρῶσμάτ' ἐμελλόν ἐπ' ἠόνεσσ' ἑλκεσθαῖ

Εἰ μὲ ἀρ Οἰάγροιο παῖς Θρηϊκίος Ὀρφεύς

Βῆρονίην ἐνὶ χερσὶ καὶς φορμύγῃα τανυσσας

Κραίπνεν εὐτρυχαλοῖο μέλος Καναχῆσεν αἰδοῖας

Ὀφρ' ἀμυδὶς κλονεοντός ἐπ' ἑρμμεωνταῖ ἀκουαῖ

Κρεγμω, παρθενίην ἐνσπην εἰσιταλο φορμύγῃ.

Apol. Rhod. B. 4. l. 904.

BUT nobler arts are thine; sublimer toils, †
 When Zion crowns thy cares with other spoils;
 When Sorrow dries her tears, Despondence flies,
 As thou unfold'st the counsels of the skies:
 When touched by thee, her holy valves uncloze,
 And far within, the sacred splendor glows,
 While, thro' the mazy walk, thy powerful hand,
 Conducts thy pupil to the central stand.
 Whence his clear ken, by heavenly art refin'd,
 Takes in the mighty scheme that fills the mind;
 While at each glance, Imagination burns,
 And as he views, the man to angel turns.
 O may the sacred influence spread around,
 Till wild licentious rage, with awe profound,
 Submits, obsequious, to its wide controll,
 And claim the nobler freedom of the soul!

The leader thus of Israel's holy choir,
 (When bloody Saul, with persecuting Ire
 Th' anointed youth of Heaven's own choice pursued,
 Resolv'd to stain the sacred court with blood,)
 Struck the sweet lyre, and rais'd the potent lay,
 The demons heard the hymn, with pale dismay,
 And from their ancient home with fury chac'd,
 Forfook their mansion in the maniac's breast.

* His Lordship's KEY TO THE NEW TESTAMENT, a book that
 contains more important information in a small compass, and thence
 more adapted to general use, than, probably, any mere human com-
 position.

NOTE, ON PAGE 561,

ACCIDENTALLY OMITTED IN ITS PROPER PLACE.

* The zealous opposition made by the Puritans, as they were called in the reigns of James and Charles 1st to our ecclesiastical establishment, seems, in the age of philosophy, and moderation, not easily accounted for, unless we suppose that those who were impelled by motives of conscience, were in a great measure under the guidance of interested leaders, who had some purposes to accomplish, which they did not chuse to avow. It is well known that the Huguenots in France, some time before this period, had designed a Republican form of Government in the Southern parts of France; for this we have amongst other proofs, the testimony of SULLY, whose son-in-law, the Duke of Rohan, was at the head of the party. The apprehensions arising hence, might have induced the Government in England, to oppose the introduction of the new opinions, with respect to ecclesiastical polity, with a degree of vigilance and severity, which, however complained of at the time, admitted some defence even then, a defence, which we now may review in the calm light of speculation, as the good sense, the moderation, and distinguished merit of the Dissenters in general, both as to their religious and political conduct, have effectually taken away the force of all such objections. But, at the time when the zeal of Puritans against the established hierarchy, was kept alive by constant communication with their Republican brethren at Geneva, the friends of ecclesiastical and civil subordination, might have defended the severity of their vigilance by something like the following arguments—they might have urged, "That in every well regulated Government, the State preserved a check upon the public teachers of morality and religion: of this, the Arcopagus at Athens; and in Rome, the censorial

" office, were conspicuous instances—that with respect to Athens, when
 " the power of the Areopagus had declined; the mass of the people
 " was gradually depraved, by a perpetual and uncontrolled influx of
 " novel opinions—that the same causes must always produce the same
 " or similar effects. That the popular election of moral and religious
 " teachers, gives a perpetual opportunity to the candidates, of apply-
 " ing to the passions, the prejudices, the interests, or the speculative
 " vanity of the audience, so as to propagate the most pernicious te-
 " nets, whether political, religious, or moral. That from the nature
 " of such popular elections, a Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly,
 " (however the majority of its individuals may be men of great mode-
 " ration and loyalty,) does not possess the power of applying proper
 " correctives in cases of innovation, and hence, if the party be pow-
 " erful, extensive, and at all inclined to interfere with political or ec-
 " clesiastical establishments, it will, in time, either gain the ascen-
 " dancy, or that monster in politics, an *Imperium in Imperio*, will be
 " the consequence."

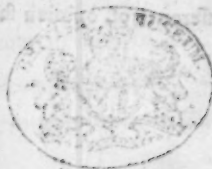
" That even supposing Government as corrupt and arbitrary as the
 " puritanical opponents might suppose, yet it is more the interest of the
 " most corrupt Government, to preserve their subjects in the bounds
 " of morality and good order than it can be of those, who wish to
 " disturb the settled subordination of the state, and as Christianity
 " teaches us to believe, that our duty and happiness consists in our
 " loyalty, the interference of the temporal powers in the choice of
 " religious teachers, is a main wheel in the system of political order."

These pleas, however, are now antiquated; the attachment to the
 constitution, shown by the body of Dissenters, shows that they are
 fully sensible of its value, and the merit of their Clergy, in supporting
 the best interests of mankind, entitles them to the highest respect.
 Some theoretical opinions have, indeed, been sent abroad by individuals
 (who pass for Dissenters,) inimical to every sound tenet of policy and
 religion; but with such opinions the great body of that Church is un-

infected, and it is hoped they will make use of every means in their power to repress and discountenance, such innovations, as by the ignorant and prejudiced are too often supposed to be adopted, by the body in general. Indeed, considering, how much the two churches are agreed, as to the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, it is to be lamented, that any difference of opinion should subsist between them.

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intended, and is held that they will make use of every means in their
power to acquire, and disseminate, to their own advantage, the igno-
rant and prejudiced are too often disposed to be misled, by the body
in general. Indeed, considering how much the two classes are
opposed, as to the treatment of the colored people, it is not in-
correct, perhaps, to say that there is a great gulf between them.



U. M. I. L.

